The Life and Times of JAIPAL SINGH MUNDA

Santosh Kiro

Singh Munda' is a biography of the legendary leader, hockey genius—who as the Captain, led India Hockey Team to Gold at Amsterdam Summer Olympics, 1928, a voice of the voiceless Adivasis, a Member of the Constituent Assembly and a brain to Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, an excellent orator and man who conceived to rescue 'Jharkhand' from the womb of history.

An M.A. (Economics) from Oxford and an Oxford Hockey Blue, Jaipal quit coveted ICS career to lead Indian team at Olympics—only Olympics in history where the Gold medalist team did not concede a single goal to rivals in the entire tournament. Legendary Major Dhyan Chand was a member of this team.

Though married into the family of Indian National Congress President W.C. Bonnerjee, Jaipal dared to go against his own in-laws and formed 'Jharkhand Party' in order to lead his 'Adivasi' people to statehood by literally becoming a thorn in the Congress politics.

Jaipal was the President of *Oxford Indian Majlis*, a debating society. As the Principal of Rajkumar College, Raipur, Jaipal organised a football match in Calcutta, at which the school commoners played football with the royal princes of India.

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PRABHAT PRAKASHAN

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by Santosh Kiro

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Preface

There has been so much misunderstanding about the aims and objectives of the Adibasi Movement, and, its vilification had led the unwary into such devastating despair that I have thought it necessary to give a resume of the activities of the All India Adibasi Mahasabha. Anyone, who has seen Adibasis, trying against heavy odds to organise themselves, to regain their 'lost nerves' and to play their rightful role in the national life of the country should be encouraged to work for their administrative freedom. The charge of communalism against the Adibasi Movement is, to say the least, puerile and unfounded. This charge should surely be placed at the door of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, who agreed, without any sanction from the people of the country, to vivisect India. Today, we are paying heavily, internally as well as externally, for the folly of the two major political parties, which were the only ones the British tackled with. The Adibasi problem is such a complex and delicate one in the All-India pattern that, even in the new Constitution, special provisions have been made for Adibasis. This in itself is sufficient apologia for the Adibasi Movement.

Constituent Assembly,
New Delhi
March 15, 1948.

Jaipal Singh

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1
The Last Flight

"My name was Pramod Pahan, son of Amru Pahan. I don't know how it changed to Jaipal Singh when in 1911 my father took me to Saint Paul's School, Ranchi, on January 3rd. That was taken as my birthday and it has struck ever since. According to my mother, Radhamuni of Palna, I was born in winter."

The small airport at Ranchi, the Queen of Chotanagpur Plateau and once the summer capital of erstwhile Bihar, was flooded with a sea of people early that morning. It was March 21, 1970. A school boy flying home along with his elder brother, mother and father looked down from his chartered plane. The airport that has now been named after *Adivasi* icon Birsa Munda and has even been assigned the tag of an International Airport, did not even have a boundary wall then; and the crowd was everywhere. Unlike other days, that day the boy was in a hurry to land. But even after reaching the airport, the chartered flight went up instead of landing, and started hovering over the sky. Half an hour later when the chartered flight landed, there was not a single pair eyes without tears. The boy's father, who was traveling on the chartered flight that day from Delhi to Ranchi, was doing so for the last time. And the boy himself was flying with his father for the last time in life.

'I was still a very small boy and I did not have an inkling of an idea about the immense popularity of my father. It was when I peeped down the plane through the window and saw the sea of supporters that I realized that my father was such a big leader,' Jayant Jaipal put it.

Forty-five years after his father Jaipal Singh had passed away, his memory continued to haunt Jayant as he sat in his study that evening at his Ranchi residence. A talented hockey player, intellectual-politician, mass leader, master orator and a visionary, Jaipal Singh wore many feathers in his cap, and always inspired awe and wonder in many ordinary mortals. He was an enigma many wanted to demystify. I myself had sought an appointment with Jayant in the summer evening of 2015 to listen to him about his late father. Jayant was kind enough to invite me to his residence and was eager to talk about his father, putting together bits of memories of moments he was lucky to spend with his busy father who remained a Member of Indian Parliament his whole political life.

When I reached his place, Jayant had been scribbling something in a piece of paper, probably memories of his late father that he wanted to share with me. 'You see, most of my memories about him have become dim and I have been trying to recall a few since yesterday,' Jayant said honestly, as he took his seat and asked me to take one across his study table.

'I am ready to allow you sufficient time to recall. No hurry,' I said quickly, making him easy, and took out my note book from the bag that I carried. I looked at him in a way to encourage him to begin with some memory. He scratched his head, thrice, and after a while said: 'I have no option but to begin with my saddest day. Should I?'

I nodded.

'I was in Mayo then, in Ajmer.

'The school bell had rung as usual on the 20th March of 1970. The students, mostly sons of the erstwhile Maharajas of princely states, fixed their gaze on the class teacher who had just entered the class room and was scanning his eyes on each one of us. Finding all of us healthy and cheerful, he wished us 'Good Morning'. Just then, one of the staff knocked at the door of our classroom. He urged the teacher to come out of the class so that he could speak something into his ears. He did. A moment later, our class teacher came inside, looked at me and called me. "Jayant," he said. "The Principal wants to see you."

'I wondered why the Principal Mr. Somie Das wanted to see me! *When I joined Mayo in class IV six years back, I did not do so well in academics, but now my records were going fine*! I paced towards the Principal's office. My elder brother Birendra, who was studying in class XI, was already at the door of the Principal's office. He knocked at the door and Mr. Das came out. He ushered both of us inside his office, looked at us lovingly and said: "Birendra and Jayant, you have to go to Delhi". We asked him *why* but Mr. Das did not say much. 'Go to your hostel rooms, pack necessary clothes for a day or two. A car is waiting outside to take you to Jaipur, from where you will board an Indian Airlines flight that will take you to Delhi." He got up from his chair and gave us a send off.

'As I rushed to my hostel room to pick up a few clothes, I overheard an attendant saying to his fellow staff. "Here, Sambhu has passed away and there in Delhi Jaipal Singh."

'I did not quite understand what he meant, but sensed something was not quite right.

On the way in the car, neither of us spoke much. I told my brother Birendra what I had overheard on the school corridor and my brother just listened to me, probably not able to fully understand. 'Did you hear him properly? Or is it something that you think you heard?'

'The flight landed at Delhi airport and when we disembarked and came out of the airport, we found a lady secretary of our father waiting for us. This was unusual because she never came to the airport to receive us. It was always Narendra, our father's longtime secretary who received us whenever we went to Delhi to see our father and the lady secretary kept herself to the office works. Our fear deepened and we started feeling nervous. "Your mother wants to see you urgently. So she sent me to pick you up from the airport," she said. We hopped into the car that the lady secretary had brought along to pick us up, and the driver drove us straight to 6-Ashoka Road, the residence-cum-office of our father.

'When we reached, we spotted a crowd gathered near the house. My mother, who was waiting for us sitting near the door, upon finding us arrived, got up, came up to us and hugged us,

sobbing. "Your Dada has left us. He is no more," she burst into tears. We went inside the room and found that our father had breathed his last and his body lay in a coffin in the middle of a room.

'Sitting beside his body, my past flashed through my eyes. I recalled, how just about a month back on February 28th, my father was in Mayo for my birthday along with my mother. He had brought me gifts, and in the evening we had gone to Gulab Bari, a place near our school in Ajmer for lunch, to which I had been allowed to invite four or five close classmates. I had seen how my father would arrange annual debate competition between Members of Parliament and Mayo students in our school premises. Quite often, the students did better than the Parliamentarians. Or maybe the Parliamentarians allowed the students to do better than them. A day was then fixed for the annual prize distribution ceremony when all the winners were given away medals and the parents of the students were invited. After the prize distribution ceremony, a buffet used to be organized on the sprawling campus of Mayo where each one had to self-serve. As most of my fellow students' fathers were erstwhile Maharajas of their respective princely states—many now MPs, the occasion used to be quite a power gathering. I noticed many Maharajas bow to my father when he sat chatting with a few dignitaries at the dinner. I would not understand why, as this happened only with my father. It was only in later years I learnt the reason. Having been admitted to Mayo in class IV after I had done my primary schooling from Bishop Westcott Girls School, Namkum (Ranchi)—I was the only boy in that girls' school—I had already spent six years in Ajmer's coveted boarding cradle. And soon afterwards, these annual debates with the MPs and the prize distribution ceremonies had become a regular annual affair.

'Many memories crossed my mind. Before moving out to Mayo when I was the only boy studying in Bishop Westcott Girls School, Namkum, I had been dressed up in all white when Prime Minister Pundit Nehru had visited our house at Seramtoli in Ranchi. Two days before his visit, my parents had me bake a cake saying that a special guest was coming to see us. I did not then

know who was coming. In fact, even when Pundit Nehru came, I had little knowledge of who he actually was. The occasion was the inauguration of the Heavy Engineering Corporation, Hatia. After commissioning the Heavy Engineering Corporation to the nation, Punditji reportedly told Chief Minister Vinodanand Jha that he wanted to visit Jaipal Singh at his residence. "I do not know where his residence is, Sir," Vinodanand Jha is supposed to have told Pundit Nehru. But Jha's driver was quick to add: "Sir, I know the way to Mr. Jaipal Singh's residence." And Punditji was driven to our house in Seramtoli. When Pundit Nehru arrived, first thing he told my father was: "Mr. Jaipal, I am surprised the CM does not know where you live!" "Punditji, Mr. Jha has come to my residence at least one hundred times. But every time he comes, he is usually drunk," my father, I was told, was quick to reply.'

Many memories of Jayant about his father probably were getting fainter even to himself and he had to pause at many places, press his mind hard to recall, and narrate slowly. Several decades have passed after Jaipal Singh, who had earned the name of Marang Gomke (Big Master) from his kinsmen and supporters in the Jharkhand of his dream, after he had passed away. His memories have now nearly faded and the present generation knows little of him. Many who now reside in Jharkhand and in Ranchi, the capital of this new state, have just heard his name but do not know much about him.

No proper work has been authored about this great leader of the Adivasis, who won the first Field Hockey Olympics for India, earned a Masters degree from one of best varsities of the world, became the first Adivasi to qualify ICS and also quit it, returned to his native Chotanagpur to organize his kinsmen, and entered the Parliament to become the voice of Tribal India that reverberated in the Constituent Assembly. Jaipal himself had left very little in writing about his activities. In my effort to know about Jaipal, I had gone hunting works that spoke of Jaipal Singh, but to little avail. My efforts had taken me to Jayant, who those days resided in Ranchi.

Jayant's narration of the last moments of his father was long.

'Memories of many incidents flashed through my mind, emotions welled up in my eyes and I saw the same in my brother Birendra too,' Jayant continued, picking up from where he had left last.

'My mother remained mum. She realized things had to be arranged for our father's burial.

'A chartered plane of Indian Airlines had been booked to fly our father's body back to Ranchi, the small town which had seen him as a child and later witnessed his activities as a mass leader. When our flight carrying my father's body reached Ranchi, through the window of the aircraft I saw below a sea of men and women crowding all over the airport. The airport, then, had no boundary wall and the people had packed up even the runways. Till then, I had little knowledge about the popularity of my father as a mass leader. It was for the first time that I realized the same, noticing the huge gathering of men and women who had gathered from different parts of his dream Jharkhand to welcome him back in Ranchi. The pilot could not land the plane. The plane had to circle for about twenty minutes in the sky, waiting for the airport staff to clear off the runways from the huge gathering. Evening was drawing close and the whole of the town had turned up at the airport. The news of my father passing away had spread like a wild fire far and wide and people from nearby villages too had walked several miles to see their leader for the last time. Finally, when the runway got cleared the plane landed. My father's body was driven straight to our house in Seramtoli Chowk near G.E.L. Church, where we then lived. The crowd of supporters followed. We kept the body for public visit and throughout the night there was an endless stream of visitors.

'It was decided that my father be laid beside his mother in our native Takra in Khunti sub-division, about 40 kilometres south of Ranchi. With my father's coffin placed in an open vehicle, we set off for Takra early next morning. What looked like just a few hours drive, took a long time as crowd of supporters stopped the vehicle at every village on the way to pay their last tribute. After half the distance, it was decided that the vehicle would not stop at any more village because the sun was beginning to go down. When we

reached Takra, our ancestral village in Khunti, evening had started drawing in. But another bout of tough hours was waiting for us.

'In my family, only my father had converted to Christianity and the priest of the local church wanted to perform the last rites in accordance with Christianity. But the local pahans (the Munda priests) claimed it has to be in accordance with the traditional rites of our ancestors, as our family came from the pahan line. Neither the church priest nor the *pahans* would relent on the issue. After about one hour of hard negotiations, the two groups came to an agreement. First the local church priest would perform the rites in accordance with Christian way and then the *pahans* would take over to complete the rest. The priest read a passage from the Bible and sprinkled holy water on the body of my father, handing the rest of the burial ceremony to the *pahans* to complete. The pahans then performed the last rites in accordance with the ways of our ancestors. Thereafter, my father was laid to rest in a graveyard next to his mother's. It was only in later years that I would understand why my father was placed beside my grandmother.

'We had to come back to Ranchi on the same evening as the charter flight was to fly back to Delhi. But when we reached, it was dark. As the airport did not have the facility for night operations, the pilot decided to stay back. He could fly back to Delhi only on the following morning.

'My mother probably did not want us to go through for long the pains of our father's loss, and hence she decided to leave us in Mayo within three-four days after my father's demise. She thought our going back to school and getting back to normal routine would help us cope with the sudden sorrow that had befallen upon us. But, back in school for many days I would continue to wait for my father's letters that he regularly wrote to me, unable to believe that he was no more.

'Nine months into that year, Christmas had come again. And there was another group of students in Mayo who were waiting for my father to come. They belonged to the North-East. Those days, traveling to North-East from Rajasthan was a tough task. Students had to travel first to Jalpaiguri near Darjeeling by train and then to Bagdogra by road to take a flight to go to the North-East. Nearly

every year, there used to be quite a few of them who could not get tickets, and they had to spend Christmas in Ajmer itself, away from their families. My father would organize holiday trips for them every year, taking them to different places in and around Rajasthan for site-seeing during the Christmas holidays. That year, there was no such trip for them. There never was another Christmas holiday trip for them after 1970.'

Coffee had arrived and it put a pause on Jayant's narration. I took a sip of the hot coffee and asked: 'Most of the time, you have always been outside the state of your father's dream. Did you ever feel like going around to places where he roamed about awakening the tribal people?'

Jayant took a long breath, sipped from his cup and continued:

'Yes. Yearning to know one's root never lets you to rest, you see!'He forced a smile.

'It is this yearning that would take me from one village to another, all across Chotanagpur, Sigbhum and Santal Pargana—now Jharkhand, the province of my father's dream, as I entered adulthood.

'After completing my studies at Mayo in Ajmer, I went on to spend two years in Bristol and another three in Durham. But, my mind kept coming back to *Jharkhand* when I was away. I was restless to discover the villages that my father toured during his movement days. I wanted to smell the sand and the dust of these villages; I wanted to see the forests, the hills and the dales which had witnessed my father's dream. I wanted to listen to the thrilling beats of the *mandars* and the *nagaras*, the beautiful sounds of the streams in the forests, the soothing sounds of the cool breeze. I wanted to meet the people who walked with my father in his dream. As a child, I had gone around a few villages around Ranchi, mostly with our driver Barna. He would engage logic to convince me to buy fighting cocks from the village *haats* and I would use the pocket money that I got from my mother to buy these colourful birds. Now, I wanted to re-visit those village markets and see for myself those roosters to remind myself of my childhood days.

'I came back to Ranchi from Durham in 1979. So much was the yearning in me to discover my roots that it would not allow

me to take up a job, instead it drove me to go around villages of 'Jharkhand' to discover my father. I wanted to find what this 'Jharkhand' was which was conceived in the mind of my father and his fellow visionaries.

'After coming back from Durham, first I decided to go to Takra, our ancestral village in Khunti, where my father was laid to rest. My chacha Jaishriwas there. He did not have the chance for higher studies, but he spoke flawless English. His English was that of a true Briton with the proper English accent of a real Englishman. If one put Jaishri *chacha* behind a curtain and listened to him speaking, no one could ever think that he was not an Englishman. But he would not reveal much to me about my father, or his movement for separate state of Jharkhand. Probably it was due to sibling rivalry. "How good was he in hockey in his childhood? In which field did he play hockey in Takra?" But, even elderly villagers in Takra were not able to recall about the hockey talent of my father in his childhood days.

'I went to Maranghada, the local market. This was the biggest local *haat* near our ancestral village. I had visited this market quite a few times even in my childhood. But this time, the market had changed a lot. The fighting cocks were there for sale as before, but lots of industrial goods had flooded the market now. Earlier, people exchanged goods for goods. Now they had cash to purchase their necessary things.

'When I reached Senegutu, a village near Khunti I met Ramlal Pahan, a very close associate of my father. He and his wife were childless and they were hell bent to write off their 90 acres of land in my name. I politely declined but they insisted. Finally, I said OK, but only for 10 acres. "I would not have it for free, I would be paying you for it," I said. Ramlal said "No". Finally, after a long conversation I managed to convince Ramlal that he should take something from me for the land. "Okay, get a Bullet motorbike for me, I want to ride it just like the *thanedar* of Khunti does," said Ramlal.

'Ramlal was lean and I could imagine how he would look riding that huge thing. I began another round of conversation; this time to convince him that he should not ride a Bullet, for that

would be fatal for his size. Finally, I managed to convince him that he should ride a Moped. I purchased a Moped for Ramlal and also gave him the money for his land. A few months later, I was grieved to hear that he had passed away in a fatal road accident.

'I went to Chaibasa, a small town in Singhbhum, which my father, I had been told, frequented during his *movement* days. There were no roads to different villages and I just had to walk.

'Chaibasa has been a very famous place even before the days of the British,' I interrupted Jayant.

The Munda tribe of the Austro-Asiatic family mainly comprises groups like Mundas, Hos, Santhal, Kharia and Bhumij. While Mundas mostly live in Ranchi and Khunti district, Santhals in Santhal Pargana, Kharias in Simdega and Gumla, the Hos have their concentration in Singbhum, the region in which Chaibasa is the main town. The different tribes in this Austro-Asiatic family of tribes differ only slightly in their languages now, but share a common ancestry and common past, common tradition and customs. Hos, it is said, branched out from the main Munda tribe just a few centuries ago reportedly because the group could not pronounce '*d*'. The Mundas call *man* 'Hod' but one group could not pronounce '*d*' and called it just 'Ho'. Therefore, that group had to go separate way and later call itself as 'Ho Munda' or simply 'Ho'. Hos have also been known as '*Larka Munda*' (the fighting Mundas), because they were very fierce and indomitable in defending their country against the rapacity of their neighbouring chiefs. J.B. Hoffman, the Belgian missionary to Ranchi who authored the voluminous Encyclopaedia Mundarica, however, notes that it is probably the entry of the Oraons into Chotanagpur which made the Ho group separate from the Mundas. "The Hos having no tradition about the establishment of the Nagabanshi rajahs in Chota Nagpur, it must at any rate have been before that time. The Oraons say that it was their entrance into Chota Nagpur that caused the exodus of the Hos. Col. Dalton (Description Ethnology of Bengal) doubts this because it is incredible that a race inferior to the Hos should have been able to drive them out. But surely, the extreme aversion of the Hos for any aliens is quite sufficient to explain a free withdrawal to the large and seemingly

unoccupied expanse of jungle, the *sindisum*, the country of trees, they had before them." Oraons, as the tradition of the tribe goes, had their kingdom somewhere in the plains of Bihar, had been attacked by the Muslim invaders—referred by historians like P.C. Roychoudhary in his book '1857 in Bihar: Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana', published by Government of Bihar in 1959—lost the battle on the third occasion and had to fleeto Chota Nagpur, then inhabited and ruled by the Mundas. This must have happened after 1526, because according to Roychoudhary, Turk-Afghan rulers did not arrive on scene in this part of the geographical area, before. One group of the Mundas offered them shelter and even gave them their own land to settle. Probably, the other group of the Mundas had not liked this generosity and had deserted the first group, who later came to be known as the Hos after moving to *sindisum* (what is now known as *Singbhum*). Whatever may have been the case, the Hos and their town Chaibasa, were strongholds of Jaipal Singh's movement for his dream Jharkhand. Jayant, one could be sure, knew some of this history of the Munda race.

'My father carried the Munda pride in him all through. He would sometimes narrate to me the glorious days of the Mundas. During my visits to villages, I was told by the elderly villagers that when my father held important meetings in Ranchi, each village of the distant regions like Chaibasa, Simdega, Kolebira etc, would choose two representatives and send them to attend the meetings convened by my father. They would carry rice, pulse and utensils on their shoulders and set off for Ranchi on foot. After walking the whole day, they would take shelter in the very village where the sun went down. They would cook for themselves and spend the night there. Sometimes, the sun would go down in the middle of the forests and the two representatives would just spend their night there, braving wild animals. On the following day, they would again walk for Ranchi. The travel of the representatives would take two-three days, depending on the distance of the village they set off from. After attending the meeting and listening to the leaders of separate Jharkhand Movement, they would go back the same way. Upon reaching, they would narrate to the whole villagers what they had heard and had been directed to do.

'I heard quite a few stories from the villagers during my tours. My father, villagers told me, would start addressing the gathering. Often the speeches were long as he had to virtually begin from the level 'zero' and slowly build up, educating people about the dream of separate state of Jharkhand, about the need of mass mobilization and why a separate state was the only way out for all their miseries. In the middle of his speech when he noticed that people were feeling tired, he would stop abruptly and say: "People of this village are very inhospitable. Look, I have been speaking here for the last one hour and nobody has offered me even a glass of water." Somebody from the crowd would get up and run home to come back with a glass of rice beer. My father would take it and begin his speech again.

'Those days, Adivasi and Non-Adivasi Sadan people's economic condition was equal, in the sense that they had just enough for sustenance. The only rich man in the village used to be the Sahu who bought forest and other produces from the villagers and sold to them the necessary household items. All the people of the village would gather for the meetings.

'I heard this story from several elderly villagers in Kolebira: One day, after he finished his meeting in Kolebira, a relatively famous place in Simdega district, located about 140 kilometres south of Ranchi, someone gifted my father with a *khasi* (a male goat). My father is supposed to have decided to hold a party on the top of a huge hill in Kolebira. The young, the elderly and the children, everyone agreed with his idea. But an old woman came up to him and said: "*Babu*, I cannot climb the hill. But I want to take part in your party." My father is said to have carried her piggyback up on the hill top. And the party was held there till late evening.

'During my going around, I reached Bolba, a remote place in Simdega district bordering Orissa. Soon after my arrival, news spread, and old Jharkhand Party members came to welcome me. A Jharkhand Party stalwart in the area ordered his men to go to the nearby river and catch fish so that I could be given a good treat. That night, I had to stay back in the village to partake in the fish treat that they arranged for me. Later, I must have visited

hundreds of villages around Jharkhand listening to stories related to my father and his movement, from men and women with whom he worked.'

As we were winding up the conversation, I asked Jayant where I should look for materials related to his father and his Jharkhand Movement. Jayant told me that his father had given a large number of letters that he wrote to different leaders and received from different people, to former IAS officer Kumar Suresh Singh, who was an author and wanted to write on Jaipal Singh. But, Kumar Suresh Singh had not been able to come out with a book due to some reason. These letters are packed away in a wooden box and kept at the Ashok Nagar residence of the late author, whose family now no longer resided here. Jayant too handed me a copy of *Lo Bir Sendra*, not strictly an autobiography of his father but something like it, which Jayant had got published in 2004 after a scholar from Oxford, on finding it out with an elderly professor of Oxford with whom Jaipal himself had left the manuscript, had given to Jayant.

—Lo Bir Sendra,
An Autobiography

❐

2
Lo Bir Sendra

"The 'Lo Bir Sendra', the annual community hunt, was one of the biggest events of the year. It was one occasion when youngsters could call names to elders without any danger, with immunity."

Voluminous literature has been generated about most great men of India. Though Jaipal Singh was no less than them, he has been let to pass into oblivion for some mysterious reason. I found no literature worth his stature. So when I got a copy of *Lo Bir Sendra*, it did not take me more than two days to complete. *Lo Bir Sendra* is unlike a proper autobiography, 'beginning-to-end' narration, rather it is some 'snippets' of his life which he put in writing at different point of time of his life."I do not even feel that he would ever have thought that it would be published in its original form," Jayant observes in the Preface of *Lo Bir Sendra*.

Though Jaipal's family hailed from Takra village in Khunti, most of his childhood memories pertained to Ranchi, and reading the very description of Ranchi in *Lo Bir Sendra*, one gets a fairly good idea of how Ranchi must have been in early 1900. Jaipal says that Takra had been "almost completely converted to Christianity to the Anglican Communion". There was a church and a primary school where young children from surrounding villages like Hatudami, Kurkutiya, Giki, Remta, Siladon, Hazam and Tunju would come to learn their basics. Maranghada—still famous even today for its weekly *haat* (market), used to be a big market even then. Khunti and Maranghada are about five miles

from Takra, the ancestral village of Jaipal. Khunti then was a Sub-Divisional headquarters, now a separate district recently carved out of Ranchi.

"Ranchi had been the summer capital of Bihar, two hundred and twenty miles west of Calcutta in a straight line towards Bombay. It was a small town with hardly twenty thousand people. Only government houses had electricity. The nearest railway station was Purulia, 72 miles to the east. Ranchi became the capital of the district in 1842. Before, it was Lohardaga, 46 miles west."

Due to its cool weather, Ranchi had earned the distinction of a summer destination, particularly for the educated and wealthy gentry in Calcutta, the political, cultural and intellectual hot bed of the British Raj. Many well-to-do Bengalis built their farm houses far away from Calcutta, in Ranchi where they would come to spend their summer days. Many landlords and lawyers were among such people. Some of them even chose to settle down in Ranchi while others came there only to spend some time. In early 1900 when young Jaipal went there from Khunti, Ranchi was a municipality with some good educational institutions set up and run by Christian missionaries.

Jaipal Singh, born to Amru Pahan and Radhamuni on January 3, 1903, was the second child, Kistomani being his elder sister and Jaishri and Raghunath being his younger brothers. Amru Pahan himself was the youngest of five brothers. Pahantoli, where his family resided, was a hamlet in Takra village, and as the name of the hamlet suggests, it was inhabited mainly by Pahans, the priestly class in the Munda race. They performed puja for Munda families on different occasions like birth and death, during sowing of seed and harvest, and during festivals. Jaipal's childhood name was Pramod Pahan and he reveals that he himself did not know how it changed into Jaipal Singh "when in 1911 my father took me to Saint Paul's School in Ranchi on January 3rd. That was taken as my birthday and it has struck ever since".Going by the Adivasi reckoning, the Pahans were rich and Amru Pahan owned two horses—one black and another white. His father lived "expensively" and kept "a nautch girl" in Remta, a nearby hamlet, who never came to Pahantoli, for Radhamuni, Amru's wife would

not tolerate her. Young Jaipal liked to race but "more than once I came to grief. The white horse was a wobbly sprinter".

Jaipal was his mother's darling. He went with her to village haats to buy potatoes, tomatoes and brinjals. Jaipal recalls how during one of those marketing spree, he went to Hazaam bazaar with his mother during rainy season only "to find that they just could not come back", after the river that flowed by, got flooded due to heavy shower. They had to go back to Hazaam and spend the night with one of their relatives. This river has now got a bridge built over it.

For the Mundas, hunting wild animals had been a sport that no elderly, young men or the male children wanted to miss, unless he was unwell or physically crippled. Popularly known as Lo Bir Sendra, this annual community hunt used to be occasions when everyone was equal, in the sense that the young men did not need to remain under the control of the elderly. "It was one occasion when youngsters would call names to the elders, without any danger, with impunity," recalls Jaipal. At the end of the hunt, the elders however, assumed their superior social position and met in a "council to judge outstanding village disputes", in which youngsters were not allowed to sit. The rituals of *Lo Bir Sendra* have stayed even today, particularly among the Ho Mundas in Singbhum, but the forest department has managed to dissuade the hunt-loving Mundas from killing animals. These days, the Mundas, mostly in villages around Steel City of Jamshedpur, gather near the forests and organize shooting competitions with bows and arrows, remembering the traditional *Lo Bir Sendra* of their more valorious ancestors. The Mundas in Khunti region, on ther hand, have this *Lo Bir Sendra* only in memory, as no hunting activity is organized any more there.

There was a school in Takra where young Jaipal learnt the basics. No fee was required to pay to the school except that "at the end of the harvest every household gave one mound of paddy". Lucas Master, a kindly teacher, taught him Hindi and Arithmetic and a few words of English like 'Thank you', 'Good Morning' and 'Good Bye'. But Jaipal's farther soon decided to send him to Ranchi. Jaipal's sister Kistomani too was put in St. Margaret

School, situated next to St. Paul's. But his sister Kristomani did not study much because his mother wanted her to learn household works, get married and settle down in life.

Jaipal was very close to his mother, more than his other brothers were. Whenever he talked of his mother, he recounted this loving relationship that was unfathomable. It is said that after coming back to Ranchi in order to take charge of the Adivasi Movement, first thing Jaipal did was to travel to Takra Pahantoli, his ancestral home to see his mother. His father was no more then. 'Mother, I want to join politics,' he told her. His mother went into a moment's silence and said: 'Do what you like to, but do not expect any thanks from people you want to work for'.Jaipal never forgot these wise words of his mother. Today, while a section of the Adivasi population talks in praise of his visionary leadership for Tribal India, another section is not so kind to give him the credit for it. His beloved mother used to come to Ranchi once a fortnight to see and "cook mutton curry for me. Canon Cosgrave was very deferential to her. She was a beautiful woman but conservative". Probably this was why Jaipal had to be buried beside his mother's grave. As for Canon Consgrave, he was a wealthy priest from England, who was not only the principal of Saint Paul's School, but had donated his entire fortune to the educational cradle. It is this English gentleman who would later play the most important role in shaping the life of young Jaipal.

Jaipal had by now been baptized into Christianity by the Canon, who was harbouring a big dream for this multifariously talented Munda boy. Meanwhile, something unsual took place in 1918 for the Canon himself. His superior Bishop Westcott, who had been Canon's curate before he came to India, told Canon that he was too old to continue as head of St. Paul's School. But Canon was not willing to let go. He had to be begged to submit to the Bishop's discipline and finally he did, but not before getting a suitable post back home in England. The Canon cabled to Bishop Monle of Durham regarding his rehabilitation and the reply came soon. The Canon was offered the parish of Holy Trinity, Darlington. And when he was leaving for England, he made the most astounding announcement: he was going to take young

Jaipal along. The Bishop and others pleaded with the Canon not to do so, but the Canon probably saw in young Jaipal what others could not. Later, Jaipal remembers how he could not go home to Takra to bid goodbye to his parents as everything happened in so much rush. "We traveled to Calcutta by train. He bought me a grey suit at White aways. I had never worn a suit before," Jaipal remembered. This journey was the turning point in the life of young Jaipal and it is this trip to England where the dream of separate State of Jharkhand was silently getting sown. From the account provided by Jaipal, one feels that the Canon was a man of his own kind, caring little even with the British if they erred on humanity. "At Bilaspur a Bengali entered the compartment which was already full. A British objected, the Canon said he would give him lower berth and sleep on the floor! At Raipur, the next station, the British disembarked gracefully," Jaipal wrote.

The two set off for their destination on ship in a high sea. On the way, some ICS officers who knew the Canon and were going to England on leave, were the first of the senior English officers young Jaipal interacted with for the first time in his life. Journeying first by train, then on a ship and again on a train, the Canon and young Jaipal arrived at Darlington, "the home of the railways", where they were received by the friends of the Canon and the officials of the Holy Trinity Parish.

Apart from the Canon, the Fosters, a rich family in Darlington were the first ones to take care of the expenses of young Jaipal. Jaipal was sent to St Augustine's College, Carterbury for priesthood where Bishop Arthur Mesac Knight, Roberts who later became Bishop of Singapore, Babcock Senior and Bhyth were among the first of his teachers. The students, recalls Jaipal, were mostly veterans of First World War. After spending two terms, Jaipal was sent to St John's College at Oxford on Hertfordshire Scholarship of the value of forty pounds, where he spent many precious years of his learning life. It is here that his hockey talents were first discovered, which eventually made India clinch the first ever Olympic gold under Jaipal's captaincy.

Jaipal displayed rare sports talent right from his teenage, though back home in Takra Pahantoli no one quite recalled. Munda

children usually are sturdy by way of their running and jumping around soon after they can take to their feet. The vast open fields, the hills and the dales provide them the grooming grounds for their physical activities unlike other children. In the village, as soon as a male child is able to run around, he picks up a hockey stick made out of wood or from bamboo, and joins the older boys at the game in the evenings. The older boys would initially assign him the role of the goalkeeper, and when he had succeed in saving a few goals, he would get promoted to take care of the defence. After he mastered the art of dribbling the ball and gained some control of the ball on rolling, he wanted the forward positions. This is where he had to vie with several other talented players. He had to prove his talents by scoring a few goals to permanently secure a position in the forward. Jaipal might have picked up his hockey talents at Takra Pahantoli itself, completely unnoticed by the world outside, except his own peers. And this taste and talent was waiting to be actually groomed and noticed in far away Britain.

Jaipal remembers how a notice was put up at his cradle inviting freshmen, freshers to indicate their choice of the games. But he lacked courage to put his name. As no one had seen him playing, he was not recommended either for the trial for the Varsity team. "I asked the hall porter Henry, what to do. 'Sir, you go to GRF Turner in the turf and he will fix you up. He runs the Isis Hockey Club'." Jaipal remembers how he took Turner to the 'Golden Cross and stood him beer after beer, and gave him his subscription of ten shillings for the Isis Hockey Club'. Turner then asked him to play for the Oxfordshire against the Varsity occasionals, in which Jaipal scored 'two short corners'. Bill Blake, who probably was a sports official with the power to make important decisions, was watching the game. At half-time, Blake came upto Jaipal and inquired why he had not put his name for the freshers' trial. After the match, Jaipal was in for a surprise. He saw his name on the notice board, against which it was written: 'Representative colours have been awarded to Jaipal Singh'. This was the beginning of a great sports journey for Jaipal, that later would make him lead the Indian team into first Olympic Gold, captaining men like Major Dhyanchand, risking his ICS.

Jaipal played many matches for the Oxford team, even captaining the team on a few occasions. He was termed the "finest fullback of the century" and he credits this not to his skills in the game but to his "sprinter talent", due to which he was able to "outrun the cumbrous British forwards". He introduced, what he calls, "five halves games" to the world of hockey, his personal contribution to the game. Subsequently he got colours for football, tennis and rugby too, and he could have got the same even for cricket. But he was not interested in cricket. Coming from Jharkhand where quick spotting of catapulted stones is important for survival, he could "see the ball seconds before anybody else did". He liked "watching cricket but did not like fielding the whole day".

If there is any intellectual and mass leader in India whose name spontaneously figures as a perfect blend of sports and academics, it is Jaipal. He was excellent even with academics, and though he was "not interested in sex and drinks, and cinema", he raved for theatres. This unusual love for theatres, he attributes to his Adivasi descent, where every Munda boy or girl displayed a natural instinct for song and dance. Indian students had the Oxford Majlis, a debating society, which met every Sunday, where people like Lala Lajpat Rai, Srinivasan Shastri, Annie Besant, C.F. Andrews, E.M. Forster and George Lansbury were members. Verrier Elwin, who later came to India and wrote profusely on different Adivasi groups of India, too was a close friend Jaipal often talked about.

Jaipal's hockey achievements often made to the popular newspapers of the day in London and the reports eventually reached India too. Back home in India, newspapers here carried out a guess work on Jaipal's decent. Going by the surname 'Singh', some reported that he hailed from Punjab, where this surname was common and they loved hockey too. One Reverend Edward Whitley, a renowned Mundari scholar, had to step in and write in Statesman of Calcutta, claiming Bihari origin of Jaipal. Whitley was the son of first Bishop of Chhota Nagpur, and he knew Jaipal thereby.

India decided to send a hockey team to the Amsterdam Olympiad, 1928. Jaipal was at Oxford as a probationer for the Indian Civil Service (ICS) then. In 1928, two Britons, Colonel Bruce Turnbull and Major Ricketts—both in the Indian Army, called at the Church Imperial Club. They told Jaipal that the Indian hockey team was on its way to Amsterdam. "We want you to captain the team". Jaipal agreed but told them that he had to get leave from his ICS for the term. He applied for the leave, stating that he was offered the captaincy of Indian hockey team for the Amsterdam Olympics, but was refused the leave. However, Jaipal's love for hockey forced him to decide to defy the rules of the ICS and take up the hockey offer and bear the consequences. A week later, Jaipal met the Indian hockey team at Tilbury. Among team members Jaipal recalls Shaukat Ali, who worked with Calcutta Customs and was a versatile hockey genius, and Dhyan Chand, who by then had earned quite a name playing for Indian Army in Australia. But, Jaipal soon discovered that Dhyan Chand had only one pair of trousers and needed another pair, and he had to be taken to Austin Reeds to purchase a pair.

Jaipal recalls how Dhyan Chand scored almost astronomically; and how the French team threw their stick at half time and returned home. And how Manseragh, the best English centre forward asked him to agree to his proposal of an extra match against a selected eleven. "I had already been elected the Olympic captain. I agreed. We beat Mansergh's team three-love," Jaipal wrote in later years.

The British and French press had already predicted that the hockey gold at Amsterdam belonged to India. The team won every game without conceding a single goal, and with an average of five goals against each team they played. Great Britain had not entered a team. India became the World Champion. The team returned to Bombay and was received very warmly with garlands, photographs, hugs and autographs. Jaipal returned to Oxford only to be told that he had broken the term and would have to stay for one more year. Captaining British India to world championship was no excuse to the British. Jaipal resigned from the ICS.

Jaipal regretted quiting the ICS, but life did not stop there. He was offered a job with Burmah-Shell Oil Storage and

Distributing Company of India Limited and he accepted it. Once again he became an object of curiosity as he was the first Indian to be appointed to a covenanted mercantile assistant in the Royal Dutch-Shell Group. After a few months stay in England office, he was sent to Calcutta Branch of the Burmah-Shell. Before he came to India, Jaipal did not forget to go to Darlington to get the Canon's blessings for his new venture. The Canon gifted him with a Greek New Testament and a St John's Gospel. Canon had been everything to Jaipal since 1910, for a period of 18 years, and he was very sad to part from him.

On his arrival to Calcutta, Jaipal stayed with the Metropolitan, formerly the Lord Bishop of Chota Nagpur, whom he knew while he was in Ranchi itself before moving out to England with the Canon. The Metrolpolitan ranked very high those days and top people of the world flocked to dine with him. The Viceroy of India too would dine with him.

To his dismay Jaipal discovered that the world was small and that he knew many in Calcutta too, most of whom he had come across with in England. The telephone directory availed him with the names and numbers of people like Ganen Roy, Post Master General of India; the Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga; the Maharajadhiraj Bahadoor of Burdwan; A.B. Rosser; Shaukat Ali, the Governor of Bengal Sir Stanley Jackson; Deputy Commissioner of Police Gilber Simon; Father Brown, superior of the Oxford Mission; Father Douglas of Behala; Slade, Collector of Customs; Raghavan Pillai; and a host of others. He started feeling homely here too.

The Burma-Shell entitled its officers to have one month of holidays every year and on the second year Jaipal took a holiday trip to Darjeeling on the invitation of Dilip Choudhari only to later discover that the trip was a trap to seal his meeting with his future wife. Tara Majumdar, Dilip's cousin and daughter of Agnes who was the daughter of the first President of Indian National Congress, Woomesh Chandra Bonnerjee, started developing a liking for Jaipal. They got married in St Paul's Church in Darjeeling amidst all jubilations.

Soon after, Jaipal had to leave Burma-Shell job to join Prince Wales College at Achimoto, Gold Coast Colony. The college provided for the London University degree. The principal of the college retired and Jaipal did not like the new principal. He decided to quit the job and wrote to Maurice Hallet, the Home Secretary of the Government of India, who had known him since his childhood. A few days later, he was offered the post of principal at Rajkumar College, Raipur. All the students of the college were *rajkumars*—princes of different states. Each prince had his own retinue, kitchen and a tutor. He landed a crazy idea to take the rajkumars to Calcutta to play football against Bengal schools. The Mohun Bagan Club, with which he had been associated during his stay in Calcutta, arranged the matches. A special bogie was attached to a train to Calcutta and the *rajkumars* travelled for their dream match. The *rajkumars* had the worst of time on the playground, but the Calcutta press flooded with headlines: *Princess Playing Football*! But his principalship at Rajkumar College, Raipur soon came to and end as the Maharájahs wanted an English principal. Jaipal had to find another job, this time as a minister of Bikaner State. The Maharaja of Bikaner soon promoted Jaipal to the post of Foreign Secretary but Jaipal got more enemies than friends in his new job. Meanwhile, just as he was thinking to switch job, he happened to visit Governor Sir Maurice Hallet at Government House. "Don't waste your time. Go to Ranchi. A movement of the Adivasis has just started. You have wandered all over the world serving others. Now do something for your own people in memory of the Canon." This sealed the future of Jaipal. He set his mind for his new job—this time in the forests of his native Chotanagpur, among his own people. Soon, news spread that the Chota Saheb (Burrah Saheb being the Canon himself) was back in Ranchi. The next day, he drove to Takra, his native village. His father had passed away when he was at Oxford, but mother was overjoyed to find her son back in her house again. He asked his mother what she thought about his joining politics. "Do what you like, but you must not expect gratitude," his mother told him curtly.

—Lo Bir Sendra

❐

3
Captain of a Movement

The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world...

By the end of 1938, Jaipal Singh returned to Ranchi after travelling to all possible places across the world for about two decades, during which his own people had nearly forgotten him. He was immediately accepted by the Adivasis as their Marang Gomke (Supreme Leader). 'A few months before his arrival as the President of the Adibasi Mahasabha, the Ranchi based new Adivasis had spread the story of remarkable career of this Christian Munda. Thus the legend of Jaipal developed among the masses almost overnight and to many Adivasis he appeared as a Divine gift. To the new Adivasis, he was the complete embodiment of their own aspirations and he exceedingly fitted in the structure of the new Adivasi politics' (Sinha, p. 284).

Jaipal met several Adivasi leaders of the day who had united themselves for a Movement. The gallery of leaders included Rai Sahib Bandiram Oraon, Paul Dayal, Ignes Beck, Theble Oraon, Theodore Surin, Julius Tigga among others. They requested him to become the President of the Adivasi Sabha that had been formed. Jaipal left for Darjeeling to consult with his wife and mother-in-law on the proposal of the Adivasi leaders. His mother-in-law, who was the daughter of the first President of Indian National Congress W.C. Bonnerjee, is supposed to have not liked the idea of his going against the Congress. But his wife asked him to go ahead and do what made him happy. Jaipal then arrived in Ranchi on January 19th, 1939 and put up at Bengal Nagpur Railway Hotel. He had

agreed to preside over the meeting of Adibasi Mahasabha on 20th January 1939.

The Adibasi Mahasabha's magazine titled 'Adibasi', stands testimony to that great historic occasion, describing at length about the meeting that Jaipal Singh presided over. It was the second meeting of the Mahasabha, and it was here that Jaipal Singh was handed over charge to captain a Movement.

The front page of the magazine's edition carried a photograph of Rai Saheb Bandiram Oraon and the second page carried the original picture of Birsa Munda at the time of his arrest, handcuffed and guarded by soldiers on either side. The third page carried an anthem, titled: 'Motherland is Thy Name'.

1. Given from Eternity, Motherland is Thy Name.
   O New Nagpur, Golden Nagpur thou
   Wast conceived in dream.
2. Thus far wast thou brought up in thoughts.
   In the Garment called patriotism thou shines like a flower.
3. Thou children have found rest in thy bosom through generations.
   Thou hast fed them with thy air, heat and love.
4. Thou art the lusterous pricely Garden, the home of happiness
   One cannot find a better land in the whole world.
5. All the Adibasis, ruling and priestly families are of the same blood.
   Their reciting the Mother's name bears its testimony....
   Thy name and Thy majesty will rise through the scale of Eternity.

On January 20th 1939, a sea of people turned up at the Adivasi Bhawan that stood on the bank of River Harmu in Ranchi, to welcome and to listen to Jaipal Singh for the first time. A minute to minute detail itinerary of the President-designate of the Mahasabha had been drawn up.

The occasion had been widely advertised among people all across, thus:

'Notice',

said the advertisement.
'Aiye! Jarur Aiye!!'
Adibasi Sabha ki 2 ri Mahasabha
Date 20, 21 January, 1939, 12 Baje Din.
Sukrabar Saniwar ko Ranchi ke Harmu Nadi
Ke Kinare Sabha Bhawan ke Maidan
Me Bade Samaroh se Hogi
Jisme
Sriman Jaipal Singh
Adibasi, M.A., Oxford.
Sabhapati ka Aasan Grahan Karenge.

At 11 o' clock on January 20 (Friday), 1939, Jaipal Singh was welcomed at the gate of the Bada Talab.

Komal Tirkey, a young lady who probably had been given the charge of welcoming the guests with her group of young women, in her article 'Adibasi Sabha me Behno ka Hath' thus wrote:

'Mahasabha ki safalta ka sarbpratham gaurab hamari adibasi behno ka haen. In adibasi lalnaon ne beete mahasabha ka karya aysi safaltapurbak kiya haen ki adibasion ke itihas me bade bade, sunhare shabdo me un karyo ki prasansa likhi hui rahegi....

'"Our young women worked day and night prior to January 20, the first day of the conference. Days passed like minutes, nights passed like seconds. We had to prepare 25,000 batches. Twenty five thousands! Miss A. Tigga had been made our Captain…

"These are future mothers. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world…

"From the early hours of January 19, the railway station [Ranchi] had been flooded with men and women. They came in green, each beaming with enthusiasm. The station ground turned into a kind of mela… Why? Because, our President Sahib Mr. Jaipal Singh was to arrive tomorrow. So young and old, men and women gathered there eagerly waiting for their leader.

"Within a few minutes, fire crackers started bursting and musical instruments roared. Soon, we could hear 'Sriman Jaipal Singh ki Jai'… all around the place.

"The first day of the Mahasabha had arrived. A crowd of 65,000 waited near Bara Talab to welcome the President. Wait ended at 12.30 pm, our President arrived. The proceedings of the first day passed many resolutions.

"The second day of the session. The crowd had gathered at Grand Hotel. The size of the gathering had increased today. Soon, our President Sriman Jaipal Singh came flying in a motor car, and flowers flew all around, music roared again.

"January 22, Sunday. Today, a meeting of the *Separation League* was to be held in Adibasi Swarn Bhawan. The meeting of the Separation League was to be chaired by Sriyukt Devkinandan Singh. Exactly at 1 pm, the President of the *Separation League* arrived at the meeting place with Sriyukt Jaipal Singh. The Separation proposal was passed at 4 pm and with this the conference came to an end."'

The articles suggest that on the first day of the conference on January 20, Jaipal Singh was escorted upto the dais by Theodore Surin, who till then was the President of the Adibasi Sabha. He introduced Jaipal Singh to people and urged him to take seat. A proposal was brought to make Jaipal Singh the President of Adibasi Sabha, which was seconded by Julius Tigga; and later, by all. After Jaipal Singh had taken his chair, Secretary Paul Dayal read the report of the Sabha and the proceedings progressed.

On the second day before the proceedings of the conference began, a procession was taken out on the Main Road of Ranchi with over one lac people in it. Jaipal was mounted on an elephant of the Thakur Saheb of Jaria. Passing through the Main Road, the procession went to the Sabha Bhawan—near Harmu River, via Bada Post Office (referring to present Post Office near Albert Ekka Chowk), Zila School, Kotwali and Bada Talab. For nearly two and half hours, life came to a virtual standstill in the city and residents came out to witness in large number.

During the meeting of the second day, bags were made to go around so that participants gave their contribution, each according to his or her capacity. The contributions included three goods—one pencil, one flower bouquet and one wrist watch, apart from

coins. The pencil and flower bouquet was auctioned. The pencil was purchased by Amar, Jaipal Singh's eldest son with Rs 50. The flower bouquet was purchased by Babu Ganesh Oraon, grandson of Rai Saheb Bandiram Oraon. The price of the wrist watch that had been presented as contribution was Rs 21 and it could not be auctioned due to lack of time.

The garlands that were presented to the new President Jaipal Singh, too, were auctioned and each of them fetched Rs 2. Thus, in all the conference collected Rs 219 by auctioning goods and garlands that came in the conference.

The doyen of Indian anthropology, Sarat Chandra Roy, attended the meetings and so did Nagendra Nath Rakhshit, an industrialist of Jamshedpur. Rakhshit presented Jaipal with a Dodge car so that he could move all over the Jharkhand area. He was a director of the Tatanagar Foundry Company and a staunch Jharkhandi supporter.

After the meeting on the second day, the new President of Adibasi Sabha, Jaipal Singh, presented the Separate League proposal for adoption and it was seconded by Babu Nagendra Nath Rakshit (Jamshedpur), and later it was agreed upon by Palamau's Babu Gorendranath Basu and Babu Kolha Oraon. They said that people of Palamau too are in favour of separation. Similarly, Babu E.D. Soy of Hazaribagh too supported the separation proposal and said that the contention that most people of Hazaribagh are against separation, was not true; and that the opposite was the truth. From Singhbhum, Tulu Manki got up and supported the proposal, saying that the Ho people of Singhbhum were in support of separation. From Santhal Pargana, Babu Santram Hembrom voiced in support of separation.

Rai Bahadur Thakurdas and Babu Imam Ali spoke strongly in support of the separation proposal.

After taking over as the President of Adivasi Sabha on January 20, Jaipal Singh addressed the people, his first public address back home. *Adibasi* carried the complete speech. Jaipal first spoke in English, and then in Hindi, and also in his mother tongue Mundari too—which mesmerized and electrified the people who had travelled for miles just to listen to him.

"Priye Sajjano, Adibasiyo,

This is one of the most momentous occasions of my life. I have been absent from your midst for nearly twenty years and you are now asking me to be your leader in the tremendous struggle (*two words not visible in the original article*) for our economic and political freedom. You are rendering me the highest honour in inviting me to be your servant, as one that serveth. One of the last wishes of my guru, the late Canon Cosgrave, was that I should come back to Chota Nagpur and lead my people to enable them to take their station of honour in the national life of India. In all solemnity, I dedicate myself to the work you are committing to me, fully realising its heavy burden and its great difficulties. (Applause '*Jaipal Singh ki Jai*'). It would be my constant endeavour to discharge my duty honestly, thoroughly and conscientiously. I thank you for the confidence you repose in me. Your loyal support will always be my strength and inspiration.

The Adibasi Movement stands primarily for the moral and material advancement of Chhota Nagpur and the Santhal Parganas, for economic and political freedom of the aboriginal tracts and, in sum, for the creation of a separate Governor's Province comprising roughly of Chhota Nagpur and the Santhal Parganas, with a Government, an administration appropriate to its moods. It is conceded everywhere that Chhota Nagpur (I include the Santhal Parganas also) suffered by being appended on to Bihar. In separation alone lies the salvation of Chhota Nagpur. We will be content with nothing less than an existence of our own, a separate Province, a separate Government, a separate administration. Then, and then only, can we ever hope to shape and mould patientlty and silently long enough for others to help us, we have trusted others in vain to help us march forward along the path of progress and improvement. Thank God, we have learnt our lesson in time. We must help ourselves. Our great future is in our own hands.

The Adibasi Movement has recently amalgamated into a united organization of all the aboriginals, political and social

societies. All the past divisions and distressing dissentions have completely disappeared and the Adibasis are now all one in their struggle for freedom from tyranny of mere numbers. We offer a united front, an amazing fact in the annals of the aboriginals. All the missionary institutions working here are with us....Even the Bengalis are crying for separation. The Europeans and Anglo-Indians are openly showing their sympathy. You have not to go far to find an explanation for all this bewildering change. We have been neglected and we are neglected, shamlessly and ignominiously. In the common cause, we shall join hands with everyone, we shall welcome everyone ready to help us truly....

Tomorrow, I shall have the privilege of addressing you again and I shall place before you the ways and means in which you can, everyone of you, assist and help, in which you can further the excellent work of the Adibasi Movement and the ways and means by which you can learn to stand on your own. My advice and suggestion will show you what you can do in our 30,000 Adibasi villages, in our 16, 00,000 Adibasi homes. Long live Adibasi Movement!"

On January 21 (Saturday), Jaipal Singh delivered his second public address. This address too was carried by the journal, *Adibasi*, in full.

"Yesterday, I told you the aims and objects of the Adibasi Movement and promised you I would endeavour to show today how the adibasis can forge ahead to station of honour in national life of India. For reasons of immediate urgency the Movement is concentrating all its strength with the Chota Nagpur plateau but in the spirit the Movement is much wider. We have not forgotten our fellow aborigines elsewhere.

The adibasis are the ancient aristocracy of India. It is they who did the pioneering work of inhabiting the almost inaccessible parts, regions which were hostile to human occupation, clearing thick forests and all the time the foreign invasions pressed them....

What adibasis require even more is protection against ministers, who are squeezed by every local interest...

Chhota Nagpur as the helpless partner finds great difficulty in obtaining substantial allocation of funds for general improvement...

The Hindus and Muslims are today struggling against the impact of social freedom. The Adibasis solved the problem of democracy, marriage laws, equality of the sexes, village government and simple living long ago. They are simple and easily contented. Their sense of private and public morality is very high. Although the Adibasis are very poor, their general intelligence is fairly high, whatever disadvantages they have suffered in the past is due to their ignorance, indebtedness and poverty than their being completely unaquanted with democractic forms of government or their political exploitation by more advanced classes. What the Adibasis need is not isolation from the more advanced sections of the population, but special measures and financial assistances for redeeming them from debt, improving their agriculture and advancing their general economic welfare by organized marketing etc, and educating them rapidly up to the standard of the advanced classes...

The real danger however is that with the transfer of land revenue and law and order to popular Ministers, far-reaching legislative changes are taking place which affect the welfare of the aboriginal tribes adversely. Opposition by the forest suboridinates, high rate of imposition of forest offences, and the restriction of rights of grazing and extraction of fuel, grass and edible fruits, all tend to make the forest aboriginal disaffected. These grievances are rarely brought to the notice of superior officers whether in the Forest or Revenue Departments, and the case often goes by default. Our complicated system of law and legal procedure is entirely unsuited to the needs of an aboriginal population, and the more so as the judges who administer that system are, with few exception, devoid of sympathy with the aboriginals. A glance at the many suits in the civil courts against adibasis would convince any impartial observer of the truth of this remark...

I have endevoured to show above how the Adibasis are suffering all around under the existing machinery of Government. Now I turn to some of the ways and means whereby they can start immediately to ameliorate their depressed situation. The weakest point in the economic life of the Adibasis lies in the fact that besides agriculture they do not engage in any other trade or profession. None of them work as tailors, blacksmiths, weavers, carpenters or goldsmiths. They can neither manufacture a cart nor can they repair, if it requires a serious job of work. Carts are therefore an almost unknown luxury to them. They own bullocks but they do not use them as pack animals."

Jaipal got immense support from N.N. Rakshit, a Jamshedpur-based Bengali businessman-politician. Rakshit reportedly had political ambitions that the Bihar Congress refused to entertain. He wanted to be elected to the Legislative Council of Bihar State and let down by the Congress."When in 1939 Jaipal with Theble Oraon went to Jamshedpur, Rakshit was their host. He is alleged to have received some money from Rakshit which he assured him to be spent in good cause. It was here they gave birth to Chota Nagpur Separation League, Jaipal informed that he turned down the offer of a place in Bihar Ministry" (Sinha, p. 285). The Second Adibasi Sabha, 'a few living person corroborate, was one of the biggest draw of adivasis and non-adivasis that Ranchi ever saw' (ibid 286).Just as some national industrialists helped the Congress, some local industrialists helped Jaipal in his mission with funds, and N.N. Rakshit was one of them. Some people pejoratively allege that Jaipal 'received' money from Rakshit. He ofcourse did, but political parties do take contribution which is not unethical or illegal. However, all the contribution went in the movement that he waged, and no trace of such funds being used for personal works can be observed. Jaipal, though till this day is the tallest *adibasi* leader and intellectual so far born, never had a house even in Ranchi, his home town. During his lifetime, he lived in rented house in Ranchi all through. His own village house is a lump of rubble.

It however invokes awe and wonder to note as to how a man who lived and studied in England since his childhood and only returned to Chotanagpur after 28 years, quickly learnt all about the land that he was born in. It was a land with a separate historical identity. Cultural identity of the geographical region was all too obvious as it starkly differed from that of Bihar, Bengal or Orissa, but historical identity was hard to observe. The history of the land had been vitiated by the successive Muslim and British rules, but the hawk-eye of Jaipal quickly unearthed it. He now wanted to bring back that history to the vivid minds of his ordinary kinsmen.

Amidst dense forest, immense natural resources, hills and dales, streams and rivers, rich flora and fauna, Jharkhand was an exotic geographical area with beauty and grace. Tracing back the history of ancient settlers, facing difficult problems and unfavorable situations, the Adivasis were the first arrivals here. They formed their distinctive lifestyle and culture having fought through wild animals and the equally wild Nature.

There existed no such thing as *adivasi culture*. Ancient man who had to fight against Nature and wild animals for their survival could not probably have paid enough attention to a luxurious thing like 'culture' at that time. His day-to-day life was mostly spent on food gathering, safeguarding himself against Nature and wild animals, co-existing with them rather than fighting against them. Creating his own world and world view in a manner befitting to the geographical surrounding he lived in, he did not realize when this lifestyle of his actually had, without his knowledge, taken form of a 'culture'.

The original form of Jharkhand is 'Jhadkhand'—which means a geographical region full of forest and hills. The Aryans and the Muslims had called this region with that name and the British later spelt this as 'Jharkhand', because of the obvious reason of '*r*' for '*d*' sound. This was borrowed by Hindi too. 'Jharkhand' does not constitute Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana alone but Purulia, Bankura, Medininagar of present day West Bengal, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundergarh and Sambalpur of Odisha, and Surguja and Raigarh of Chhattisgarh too.

This entire region has cultural similarity which is signified with language, lifestyle, world view, outlook, simplicity, social structure, equality and a common tendency to fight against exploitation.

But there is a legend in the Munda race that dates the existence of Jhadkhand even further back. The Munda race, supposed to have taken part in the Mahabharata, were fighting on the side of the Kauravas. One group further migrated into their present habitat after the battle. Legends mentions of a Risha Munda, who led them into this region, along with his army chief Sutia Munda. Upon reaching this forested region which was then inhabited only by wild animals, Risha Munda asked his army chief to go around and mark the boundary of the new kingdom of the race. Sutia Munda is known to have mounted a white elephant went around for a whole year marking the boundary of the new kingdom. White elephants existed particularly in this part of the Indian sub-continent, proof of which could be found in the writings of historians when they said that a medieval ruler sent his army chief to fight the Chero kings of Palamau and secure their prize possession—a white elephant.

After the demarcation was complete and Sutia came back where he had begun from—supposed to be at Umedanda, some 40 miles to the west of Ranchi— Risha Munda named his new kingdom *Jaherkhanda* (jaher meaning 'place of worship' and *khanda* meaning 'division'). This must have taken place sometimes before First Century A.D., because First Century A.D. was when Madra Munda ruled the kingdom with his capital at Sutiambe, a place named after Sutia Munda. Sutia Munda may have been the ancestor of Madra, after whom Madra decided to name his capital. Sutiambe is located some 10 miles to the north-east of Ranchi. (Roy, S.C: The Mundas and their Country, pg 80-81)

The historicity of 'Jharkhand' gets proven in many historial documents and observations of travellers.

Ranchi District Gazetteer of 1917, page 25 states:

> 'To the Aryans and to the Muhammadan historians the whole of Chotanagpur and adjoining hill states was known as

Jharkhand or the forest tract. It was an inaccessible frontier country and was probably one of the last conquests of the Mughals in Hindustan.' (Mahto, Shailendra: *Jharkhand Samargatha*, pg 33)

West Bengal's Purulia District Gazetteer, page 90, stated the following region as Jharkhand:

So a few years after the formal conquest of Orissa, Mansingh again sent out his troops, in 1593, from Bihar to Medinipur by what has been described as western route through Jharkhand. From the 13th century onwards, the Muslim chronicles were describing all jungle land to the east of Chotanagpur as Jharkhand, it roughly included the western portion of the present Birbhum district. Durgapur and Assansole sub-divisions of the present Burdhwan district, the sadar sub-division of Bankura district, the Jhargram sub-division and north western parts of Medinipur sadar sub-division and the whole of the present Purulia district.

Imperial Gazetteer of India writes:

Chhotanagpur, including the tributary states of Chhotanagpur and Orissa is called Jharkhand in the Akbarnama.

Historian P.C. Roychoudhary in his book '1857 in Bihar: *Chotanagpur* and *Santhal Pargana*' published by Government of Bihar, in the section titled 'Yavana Rule' stated:

"Chotanagpur was that part of geographical area, which According to historian, was known as *Jharkhand* or *Jungali country.* It is thought that this part remained free during Turk-Afghan Rule (1206 to 1526 AD). The Sultans of Delhi tried to win over some parts of Jharkhand and set up their subedars and army officers in cities and places of military importance. As a consequence, the Yavanas attacked Jharkhand till Rohtashgarh. Tarik-e-Firuz of Shams-e-Shiraj states that Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq proceeded to Jajnagar of Orissa after attacking Bengal for second time, and went back through Jharkhand after having struck a deal with the 'Rai' of Orissa.

From Shri Chaitanya Charitmrit, we learn that Chaintanya Mahaprabhu (1485), while going to Mathura in 16th Century AD, passed through Jharkhand and converted the adivasis into his sect. Sher Shah, after his second attack on Bengal in 1538, passed through Jharkhand. According to Kanungo, "Sher Shah is supposed to have made his way through Jharkhand with immense difficulties during his Rohtash attack".

These and many historical evidences only point to the historicity of the word 'Jharkhand'. A Sanskrit sloka on a palm leaf thus stated:

Ayask paatre payah panam,
Saal Patre cha bhojanam
Shayanam khajur patre
Jharkhand Bidhiyate.

Meaning: People here drink water from metal vessels; eat out from saal (shorea robusta) leaf. They sleep on the palm leaves. This is the rule in Jharkhand.

Jhadkhand is referred to in the works of Saint Kabirdas too.

Kabse chhodi Mathura nagri,
Kabse chhodi Kashi
Jhadkhand me aay viraje
Vrindavan ke wasi

Old songs in praises of Lord Shiva in the Hindu place of pilgrimage Deoghar, too, refer to Jharkhand.

Param pavitra bhumi dhanya Jharkhand van,
Base jaha pujyapad Baba Baidyanath ji.

Basan me mrigchhala, gale sobhe mundmala,
Bhasm ramaye ang Baba Baidyanath ji.

Shish sobhe jatajut, kanth nile kalkut,
Damru trishul dhar Baba Baidyanath ji.
Param pavitra...

There is yet another Sanskrit sloka

Tanao sarp jalam mahamoh kalam, trikonashritom Jharkhandinatham,
Daridrasya Chintamani chintaniya, jagarnath natham Bhajai Baidyanatham.

"Chaitanya Bhagwat" in Odiya authored by Brindavan Das too, mentions reference of Jharkhand—

Prathame chalila Prabhu Tirtheshwar, tabe Baidyanath Jharkhand gela Ekeshwar

Extensively read Kritivas Ramayan in Bengali, too refers Jharkhand:

Mandar Prithvi Jaibo, Jharkhando deshe,
Jharkhandi ra achche adbhut rupe.

(Mahto, p. 34-36)

Chaintanya Charitamrit further mentions of Jharkhand thus:

Mathura Jabar pathe asi Jharkhando mililo, prayo lok taha porom anand.
Naame prem diya karile sobar uddhar, Chaintanyer gudh lila bujha bhar.

(Mahto, p. 35 and Roy, p. 110)

English historians always tried to prove that history of India is nothing more than process of arrival, battle and settlement of peoples and groups from outside. But after archaeological findings in different parts of the country, this hypothesis has been proved wrong. Evidence of this fact is now found that when the Aryans arrived from North-West and attacked Indus Valley Civilization, they found that there existed a civilization far superior to their own—which had been developed in thousands of years. While on one hand the Aryans destroyed this civilization, on the other hand they were greatly impressed by this civilization.

The second President of India Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan in his book "Eastern Religion and Western Part" says that 'Vedic religion not only adopted the practices of ancient sects and religions but also assimilated them. Instead of destroying these practices, Vedic religion made suitable changes to

suit its needs. The Vedic religion has taken so much from aboriginal and Dravidian religions that it is very difficult today to separate which is the original Aryan element and which is not.'(Oxford University Press, USA, July 19th, 1990).

A lot of references about primitive tribes inhabiting in this region since ancient age are found in the Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas. But B.C. Majumdar in his book "Aboriginals of Central India" writes of this very confidently.

He states: "Possibly in the sixth Century B.C., Kalka Van which was also called Jharkhand, was outside the Vedic culture region of Angadesh (used for South-East Bihar) and Bangla Pradesh. Clear extension of this Jharkhand lay on the south of Gaya upto east of Shahabad, upto south of Bhagalpur, and to the west of Bankura and upto Midnapur, Santhalpargana, Chutianagpur and Sambalpur. The word Jharkhand is clearly used for referring to these areas." (Mahato, p.38)

We find another instance of historicity which belongs to the Seventh Century after Christ. The Chinese traveller Huen Tsang passed through this area and in his work described about people and this region too. Manbhum District Gazetteer tells that during Huen Tsang's visit, to the south was Orissa, to the North lay Magadh, Champa (then Bhagalpur and Burdhwan) to the east, and Maheshwar (Central India) to the West; in the midst lay a huge kingdom known as Karn-Suberna, which now can be recognized by linking it with Subernarekha River. According to General Cunningham, to the east lay Medinipur, to the west lay Surguja kingdom (now in Chhattisgarh), on north flowed River Damodar and to the south flowed Baitarani River of Odisha—in the middle lay Karn-Suberna. When Huen Tsang arrived here in the Seventh Century AD, the ruler of Karn-Suberna was Shashank, the deadly enemy of the Buddhists.

According to the ethnographer Sarat Chandra Roy, Chotanagpur word is of recent origin. The British called this region Chotanagpur in order to show difference from Nagpur that they had conquered from the Marathas. He opines that civilization

in Chotanagpur too developed at about the same time in Indus Valley Civilization. Some people also opine that Nagvanshi rulers of the region had their first capital in Chutia, and hence the Nagvanshi rulers named the region Chutianagpur, which later became Chotanagpur.

Jharkhand was not only an ancient kingdom of primitive aboriginals, but they also had their rule here. The British was always apprehensive about the people here because of their repeated revolts. Due to this reason, the British got Hindus and Muslims from other regions and got them settled here placing them as jamindars, officers, clerks, sahukars, moneylenders and businessmen. After years of living with the people of Jharkhand, these people who had been brought from other regions, also accepted the culture of the region and became one with them. In the present time, these people share a common history, pride, feelings and ego with the adivasis here.

Prior to British rule (1765), Jharkhand remained primarily Independent as it was never under the direct control of any Emperor, King or Sultan. Livelihood was earned as a group and each one, big or small, had equal rights over the food thus earned. Land belonged to the entire village and individual ownership was an alien concept.

Aborigine tribes were divided into several groups in Jharkhand and allegiance of each person lay solely to the *sardar* (mukhiya) of the group, and none else. The king of Chotanagpur Madra Munda was the chief of the *sardars*. In Palmau region, the Cheros and the Kharwars had their sway. On the east in Ramgarh, Ghatwal held the sway. To the east of Ranchi lay Manbhum (now divided into Purulia district, Dhanbad district, Bokaro district, East Singbhum (earlier Dhalbhum) and Chandil sub-division. While Kurmi kings ruled Manbhum, Bhumij kings ruled Barahbhum (Balrampur). In mid region of Chotanagpur—Ranchi, the Mundas had their kingdoms while the Uraons had their rule in Rohtashgarh. On the south, the Hos had their indomitable rule.

Ranchi Gazetteer (Edition 1970), page 42, under the head 'Medieval Period', states:

> "Besides Atavi (forest tract), the whole of Chotanagpur was called Jharkhand by the Aryans and later by the Muslim chronicles. It was also known as Khukhra. It appears that this inaccessible tract remained independent throughout the Turko-Afghan rule (i.e., 1206 to 1526 A.D.). The fortress of the Rohtas was the furthest limit of actual penetration by them towards the Jharkhand region. Shamsi-Siraj Afif tells that Firoz, after his second campaign against Bengal in 1359-60 A.D. marched from Jaunpur against the Rai of Jajnagar (Orissa) and after making peace with him, returned by some routes through Jharkhand."

The British, taking tribal areas of Bihar, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh, had formed "*South-West Frontier Agency*" in 1833, making Lohardaga its Capital. But this gave little relief to the cause of the people. The actual process of re-birth of the region that was once known by the name Jhadkhand begins with the legendary Birsa Munda's historic slogan '*abua: dishom, abua raaj'* (our country, our rule) at the turn of 1900. Before this, Sido-Kanhu's Santhal Hul of 1853-54 made the British Raj come up with the Santhal Pargana Settlement Regulation Act in 1873. And Santhal Pargana had come up as an Independent unit with a special status. After Birsa Munda's Movement, the British came up with the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908 and Chotanagpur became a separate administrative unit.

As the people of the region known as 'Jhadkhand' since old, gave sleepless nights to the British due to their repeated revolts, uprisings and battles, the British systematically diminished its identity by dividing it among Bengal, Bihar and Odisha. Out of the larger Bengal Province, these states were carved out at different points of time, but Jharkhand was not. In 1912, in tacit understanding with Odisha leaders, Bihar (including the region of Odisha) got separated from Bengal and in 1936, Orissa was separated from Bihar. Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana were kept

in Bihar itself. During this time, Advocate Theodore Surin, along with other lawyers, had demanded a separate of Chotanagpur-Santhal Pargana from Bihar.

In 1915, after Bihar had been separated from Bengal, driven by a sense of identity, members of organizations like Munda Sabha, Yatha Kishan Sabha, Unnati Samaj and Kharia Samaj came together to form one organization, naming it "Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj". In 1920, "Catholic Sabha" joined the Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj and the organization assumed a bigger size. However, Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj had primarily social and economic aims. Its social goal included its effort to address the social backwardness of the people of the region and uplift them socially while its economic aim was to empower people economically. It started a journal "Adivasi", and campaigned for its aims. The members of Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj included Theodore Surin, Rai Saheb Bandiram Oraon, Advocate Paul Dayal, Theble Oraon, Alfonse Kujur, Elias Topno, Veer Singh Munda and Juel Lakra. Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj, however, lived short. Due to differences in the members, the members broke away and went back to their old organizations. When in 1937, an election was held for formation of an Interim Government, the members fought the election separately under their respective organisations' banner, and were very badly defeated by the Congress. A self-introspection meeting was held and in 1938, Ignace Beck of Catholic Sabha brought all the members at one plank to form Adibasi Sabha, which later was named Adivasi Mahasbha.

The first annual meeting of Adibasi Sabha, with Theodore Surin as the President and Paul Dayal as the secretary, took place on May 31, 1938. It was in the second annual meeting on January 20, 1939 that the Adibasi Sabha invited Jaipal Singh to take over the reigns, which he accepted. 'Jhadkhand', which had been swallowed into the annals of history and gone into complete oblivion, slowly emerged in the conception of Jaipal as he engaged himself with the task.

Jaipal realized that the pen was mightier than the sword and in 1940 started a four-page weekly "Adibasi Sakam", in English, Hindi and his mother tongue Mundari with two thousand copies.

The weekly took his ideas to distant villages, educating people about his dream and goal. He did not charge any money for the copies, neither did he take any advertisement. The demand for the weekly grew so much that he had to print five thousand copies within six months. But due to his other engagements and insufficient funds, the weekly died an unnatural death.

The Congress had been curiously watching the unfolding of political events in the Plateau. The surging popularity of Jaipal Singh and the aboriginal resurgence there had started worrying the Congress, particularly the Bihar Congress. In January 1939, there sprang up another aboriginal organisation called Munda Santal Sabha under the leadership of Prof JC Heyward of St Columbus College, Hazaribagh as President and John Senai Nag as the Secretary. The goal of the organization was to protect the interest of the aboriginal tribes. "The Sabha itself was said to have been sponsored by the Congress as a counter blast to the Adibasi Sabha" (Sinha, p. 287). The formation of this Sabha was not liked by Jaipal Singh and his supporters, and they opposed it.

The formation of this Sabha, mentioned earlier, was not liked by Jaipal Singh and his supporters, and they made vigorous propaganda against Heyward. Heyward could not withstand the opposition of Jaipal and others and ultimately in June 1939 condenscended to merge the organisation with the Adibasi Sabha. (Sinha, p 287)

Jaipal toured extensively across the region, and everywhere thousands stood in attendance to listen to him. He was always under the glare of the police and his activities were reported to the government in details. He instructed his supporters to carry bows and insisted on including an Adivasi dance at every meeting. Initially, the Church had objections, but later it fell in line. When Jaipal went around Jharkhand with the vision of his dream, an interesting development took place that was linked with Birsa Munda and his movement of 1900.

On January 9, when Birsa Munda was holding his final meeting with his fellow Munda brothers and sisters at Dombari Buru, the British Army attacked the gathering with guns. The Mundas, who were armed with bows and arrows, retaliated with

showers of arrows. But their arrows were too archaic in front of the mighty bullets of the horse-mounted British soldiers. There were many women and children too, all of whom were simply massacred. Some fled, but most fell to the bullets of the British. There was a woman from nearby Jiuru village, who had gone with her lactating son to attend the meeting. She fell victim to a bullet, but the son still breastfed. This scene moved the commanding officer and he ordered his soldiers to stop firing immediately. He picked up the child, took him to Ranchi and handed him to Rose Steafield, the wife of the Mr. Steafield, Commissioner of Ranchi. She took the child to England, handed him over to the Queen, saying: 'The Sun does not set in British Empire but gun firing leaves such innocent children orphaned.'

The child, thereafter named Samuel, is said to have been raised by the Queen herself. The Khunti-Torpa and entire Chotanagpur region was abounding with the story that this same child had come back to Chotanagpur in order to free his people from oppression and exploitation. In reality, Samuel, however, never came back to Chotanagpur, and Jaipal was taken to be him by the people. This story still floats in the region among the Mundas.

There are several folklores that are sung in Khunti-Torpa region even today in memory of Dombari incident.

Dombari buru re chikan saddi saditana
Dombari buru re Birsa ladai saddi saditana
(What tune resounds at the foot of Dombari buru
It is the trumpet of Birsa's war at Domabari buru)

The popularity of Jaipal soared phenomenally. The Congress party in Bihar never wanted Jaipal to get bigger in political stature. However, there were two clear divisions in it: one which stood against Jharkhandi interest; and the other—where leaders from Chotanagpur-Santhal Pargana too were there—that stood for Jharkhandi interest. The second group started putting pressure on the first within the Congress for addressing Jharkhandi interest.

Soon the district board elections took place and the Adibasi Mahasabha fielded candidates for Ranchi and Singbhum. They won handsomely. In Ranchi, out of 25 seats, 16 went to Adivasi

Mahasabha candidates and in Singbhum, out of 24, 22 went to them. Rajendra Prasad, worried about the Congress losing its ground in the region, convinced the party to hold its conference in Ramgarh in 1940, with an aim to cut Jaipal into size by ensuring the presence of tall leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and others. Subhas Chandra Bose decided to hold his Anti-corruption Conference two days before the day of the Congress conference in Ramgarh, and asked Jaipal to provide him with the crowd. But the government decided to spoil Subhas Chandra Bose's Anti-corruption conference in Ramgarh and imposed section 144 on Ranchi-Ramgarh road. Jaipal took the Ranchi-Pithoria path through the jungle, to reach Ramgarh with 5,000 men armed with bows and arrows. He always insisted his supporters to carry traditional symbol of the Adivasis—the bows, arrows and green headgear. This trend has continued, and political parties and groups that fought for Jharkhand, kept these symbols in to-to. This raises a question, that whether the common adivasis stood with the Congress at a time when the Congress was fighting for Independence of the country.

In reality, the adivasis, including their leader Jaipal were very much with the Congress' single goal of Independence of the country. But despite several demands earlier, the Congress had done little to alleviate the situation of the adivasis and other residents of this part of Bihar. The Board elections where the Adibasi Mahasabha candidates registered massive victory and the Congress fared very poorly, was the glaring result of this discontent in the region against the Congress. The tallest Congress leader from Bihar Dr. Rajendra Prasad was least interested in the good of the region and its residents. After the poor performance of the Congress, the party appointed Dr. Rajendra Prasad to study the reasons behind its poor performance in the Board elections and he is learnt to have asked Jaipal to state them clearly. Adibasi Mahasabha President Jaipal Singh told Dr. Prasad that much of the discontentment of the region was not only because the Congress neglected the interest of the region, but also because it acted against the interest of the region. Jaipal suggested him that some cabinet ministerial posts in Bihar Government be reserved

for leaders of this region, youths of this region be appointed to administrative and other government posts as per population ratio, and a Degree College be opened in Ranchi.

Two days after Subhash Bose's Anti-corruption conference, the Congress conference was held in Ramgarh. But it is said that soon after Rajendra Prasad had spoken as the chairman of the reception committee, it rained cats and dogs and the camp was washed off.

A few days later, a meeting of the Adibasi Mahasabha was held and thousands of supporters walked hundreds of miles from across the region to attend the meeting. The movement spread like wild fire in Bengal, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh too, and Jaipal was in demand every where. His popularity soared and he started having very little time for his wife and family. Everyday he roamed around the region with his supporters, riding the car that had been gifted to him by Babu N.N. Rakshit. His wife Tara, meanwhile, was being told stories by other *memsahebs* of Calcutta that Ranchi was a deadly jungle full of wild animals and ants! She refused to come to Ranchi to live with Jaipal. This was beginning of the end of Jaipal's first marriage.

When the First World War that began in 1939, Jaipal got more than seven lakh adivasis recruited into Indian Army. Creation of Bihar Regiment too is credited to him. The adivasis of Chotanagpur, who had never been to a place other than their neighbourhood, now went all over the world after joining the army. They got immense exposure, something that no other decision of Jaipal or any other agency, could have managed to provide for. This expanded the horizon of their minds and when they returned home, they had valorous and proud stories to share with their fellow villagers. This single decision of Jaipal changed the mindset of the Adivasi community as a whole, as it managed to connect the aboriginals with the rest of the world, directly. From nearly every other household, there was an army man. Many army men funded with their salary the education of their own children and children of their kin, which helped create an army of educated adivasi youth.

Meanwhile, the Jharkhand Movement had caught the imagination of the masses and it was on the lips of every one. The Congress leaders, particularly in Bihar from where Jharkhand wanted separation, were deadly against and would do any thing to subdue and throttle it. Senior leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, too, did not like the idea of Jaipal. "Dr. Rajendra Prasad sent three emissaries in 1943 to talk to the Adivasi leaders to dissuade them from demand of Jharkhand but all in vain. The cry of Jharkhand was heard by leaders like Binodnand Jha who warned the authorities about the movement gaining momentum. If and when it did, those in authority would have not Jaipal Singh, the Adibasi leader, to thank but themselves owing to their indifference and neglect of the problem of Chota Nagpur despite their promises (Sinha, pg 296).

In 1946, elections were held for the legislatures. Jaipal Singh under the banner of Adivasi Mahasabha put up candidates all over. He himself decided to contest from Khunti rural. The Congress fielded Purno Chandra Mitra against Jaipal and engaged all its resources to defeat him. In order to spread terror among the common people, the Congress adopted dirty tactics and even sent goons in the guise of *swayam sevaks in* the area, loading them in trucks. Jharkhand movement leader Shailendra Mahto, in his work *Jharkhand ki Samargatha* gives a vivid description of the Tapkara incident. The killing was bloody and barbaric.

Jaipal in his autobiography mentions that "Rajen Babu's henchmen murdered seven Adibasis at Tapkara on March 2nd on a market day as they were going home. The polling was a few days later. I could have won but I retreated from the fight".

Jaipal tirelessly campaigned for his candidates. A good orator that he was, his speeches at the rallies attracted hundreds and thousands of adivasis and *sadans* equally, and ignited them to join the movement.

Many who were small children then, and are still alive in Khunti-Torpa area, about 40-50 kilometres to the south of Ranchi, recall the passion Jaipal infused in the people with his oratory.

Johan Nag, who hails from Bichagutu near Khunti and turned 90 year old in 2016, recalls his first encounter with Jaipal Singh, thus:

> "The elections of 1946 had been declared. I used to run a small shop outside Maranghada School. It had been announced in the entire area that Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh was scheduled to address an election rally in the campus of Maranghada. From early morning, people started pouring in hundreds from nearby hamlets with bows and arrows to listen to him. I closed down the shop and was myself soon part of the audience. With two other leaders, he arrived in a car just before noon. About two thousand people had gathered at the election rally to listen to him. A *pandal* with an elevated platform had been set up with tables and chairs. He was welcomed with an adivasi dance to the platform and seated on the dais. When he was welcomed to take the pedestal, someone ran to his car and fetched a *Rangua Murga* (Colourful Rooster) which was perching in the car. Jaipal took the Rooster from him and patted it thrice. The Rooster crowed thrice. Jaipal then lifted the Rooster up and swang it from right end to the left, and then back, in order to display it to the audience so that the audience took a good notice of the colourful bird that was not just a bird but a symbol of political resurgence. The loud applause of the audience filled up the atmosphere and Jaipal managed to instantly connect himself with the people. He then made the Rooster perch on his right shoulder and began his address. I can remember his words even today. In his small speech he explained to the people why they should vote for Adibasi Mahasabha and not for anyone else."

Jaipal convened an election rally at Ranchi in 1946 and thousands of people with bows and arrows from all over Chotanagpur travelled hundreds of miles to take part in it. Many walked for two days to reach the place, carrying on their shoulders rice and utensils. They cooked their meals wherever night fell, only to rise in the morning and continue their journey till they reached Ranchi. After the huge rally at Ranchi, Jaipal himself

toured length and breadth of Chotanagpur to campaign for the election. The Rooster went with him wherever he went. People like John Nag who are still alive even today, say that the Rooster had been specially trained to crow when Jaipal patted it. It was not afraid of the crowd, in fact it loved the crowd and it communicated with it instantly whenever his master commanded him to do so.

People who have worked with Jaipal, say that Jaipal had a philosophy behind choosing Rooster as the symbol of his movement—first for the *Adibasi Mahasabha* and then for *Jharkhand Party*, which replaced the Mahasabha later. As a young boy living in his native Takra, which was then surrounded by forests from all four directions, wild cocks were a common scene in the forests. Their crows coupled with natural music of the forest, made an irresistable attractive duet that only an adivasi living in the forest can recount. Without the crow of the wild cock, bunch of trees on the hills did not make a forest, the Mundas would often say. *If the sim (wild cock) is absent from the forest, the forest falls dumb.* In the absence of the wild cock, the forest cries a silent cry that only a Munda can feel. Jaipal began his schooling at the Church of North India (CNI) Primary School in his native Takra, which continues to be the lone school in the area even today. During his stay in the village as a young boy, he must have gone into the forest several times along with his fellow children, for wandering around the forest—a favourite pass time of a Munda boy. He must have come across wild cocks flying from one tree to another, making music to lure, trying to woo the wild hens. A keen observer that Jaipal was, these scenes must have stuck into his mind only to later transform themselves into a political philosophy. Forests on the north that lay between Takra and Ranchi, and that on the south-west that lay between Takra and Khunti, has now completely fallen victim to development. But the forest to the east which lies between Takra and Bundu is still vibrant, though it has become thin, and one can still find a few wild roosters in this forest.

While the wild rooster was fearful of man as man often preyed upon it, the domesticated rooster was friendly. A Munda family without a domesticated rooster was an incomplete one.

Reputed Munda families even counted on the number of roosters they owned, for social position. A rooster belonging to the most important family of the hamlet should lord over every other rooster in the village. And all adult hens should move and fall for him; or else it will make the life of other roosters that they fall for as torturous as hell.

However, there was another striking quality of the rooster that Jaipal had observed, and that made him choose rooster as a symbol to rally behind. "*Chacha bolte the—'murga teen baje jag kar sabko jagata hain. Bolta hain subah ho gaya, jago, jago*' (Uncle used to say—'Rooster gets up at 3 am and wakes up every one. It says dawn has come, do not sleep, awaken"—Uncle used to say, every night at 3 am, the rooster wakes up and crows. It crows and crows till all other members of the family wake up to begin their day's work, recalled Jaymashi Munda, a nephew of Jaipal in Takra. This innate quality of the rooster to awaken people formed the basis why Jaipal chose the rooster as his symbol.

A rooster could be very well trained to behave and act intelligently in public. In tribal hamlets there are professional experts who are well-versed in the art of training roosters. When the roosters are groomed, they are not afraid of men and can mingle with them just as one of them. Roosters thus trained commanded high respect of villagers, not just of the hens they flirted with. Jaipal's political rooster caught the imagination of the ordinary people and lakhs of them joined him in his new movement, rallying behind his rooster. It has almost attained the status of a classic folktale that whenever Jaipal went around the region, the rooster always travelled with him on the rear seat of his black ambassador car. Sushil Bage, Jaipal's lieutenant used to be priviledged among the lot to travel with the rooster.

People who had bicycles and wrist watch were counted to be rich. Only a few belonged to this camp and most did not have wrist watch. The rooster was trained in a such way that it used to give a loud and long crow in an interval of an hour. Jaipal had recruited a special man who understood the language of the rooster and took good care of it. On his trips to villages, Jaipal usually carried his own food, but he would not forget to carry food for the rooster

as well. He did not eat salt, but did not refuse any food that was offered to him by villagers, observers reveal. He used to take such food home, packing it well in plates of leaves.

Age bhi jai jai,
Pichche bhi jai jai,
Bich me Jaipal
Ayume pe ho, dishum te bachao tana

(There is jai jai on the front, *jai jai* on the rear. Jaipal is in the middle. Listen you folks, he has come to save your country.)

People die but their memories do not. Memories are passed on from one generation to another. In the Munda and Jharkhandi culture the oral tradition is the lifeblood of civilization. While Jaipal's memories in the people have now turned into folktales, places like Khunti, Torpa, Kolebira, Maranghada, Chaibasa, Ckaradharpur, Jamshedpur and a few others are lucky still to have people who once worked with him in their early youth days and today do not get tired of recounting their old memories, though these men are in their ripe old age now.

Taimara Ghati is a famous forest that lies between Ranchi and Jamshedpur on NH 33. Sharp turns and up-hill ride characterize the road here and leaves new drivers sweating even in cold winter. On either side of the road lie deep sharp falls. If a vehicle missed the road, it simply went down with the passengers going up. Just at the spot where the Ghati begins, there is held a weekly haat, known for its sale of aromatic rice beer, forest produces like *kendu, chiraundi*, tamarind, and different types of fish from local rivers and rivulets. It was this market that Jaipal Singh frequented whenever he toured those areas.

'It was Taimara *haat* day. I was going around the market in a jolly mood along with a few friends, looking at girls who had brought forest produces to sell. After a while a black ambassador arrived in the market. The gate of the vehicle opened and Jaipal Singh, wearing a *sahib topi*, formal shirt and a pair of trousers, alighted from the car. People ran towards him to greet him. We also ran. I saw him for the first time there. After a while, he went to a lady and asked how much money she would charge for the

small fish she had put up for sale on a plate of *saal* tree. He bought all the fish and paid her handsomely,' recalled Dinabandhu Lohra, now a nonagenarian residing below Tagore Hill in Ranchi.

Dinabandhu came from a very poor family in Pattoli village of Bundu on Ranchi-Jamshedpur highway. His story of receiving education is as much inspiring as that of his meeting Jaipal.

'I was too old for a boy to begin schooling and too young to qualify for an adult night school when I realized that I should get education. I wanted to sit in the adult night school that was run in my village those days, but I would not be allowed due to my age. One day I decided to go to the primary school in Reladih along with a Munda boy from my village who was a student there. The teacher took my interview and I passed. I was admitted in class I. When I reached class III, my teacher took me for a scholariship examination to Bundu, the nearby centre. My father had a Sahu friend and the two often would have rice beer together. When I was away for the scholarship examination, at one such rice beer party the Sahu told my father. "*Ye dada, tumhara ladka Bundu me pariksha de raha hain. Wo pariksha pass karega aur uska master paisa kha jayega.* (Look big brother, your son is taking scholarship examination at Bundu. He will pass the examination and the teacher will eat away the scholarship money". When I came back home, my father said, 'no more studying'. Though I passed the scholarship examination, I had to remain at home. My father had a court case in Khunti civil court and we both used to walk the whole day to reach there, carrying rice and utensils to cook food on the way. One day, my father gave rupees five to the lawyer and the lawyer just threw it away. Rupees five was too much for us those days but the lawyer did not know it. I decided to become a lawyer…," Dinabandhu recounted his long story.

Dinabandhu struggled hard to collect money to fund for his education. He recalled how he managed to join prestigious St. Xavier's College of Ranchi to pursue his higher education and it was during this time that he came in close contact with Jaipal Singh.

"One day I went to see him at his residence in Seramtoli. He made me sit and talked to me for a long time. When I told him that

I had seen him at Taimara haat buying small fish, he said he loved those fish. I said I can get for him those fish from my village river every fortnight. Whenever I went home to Bundu, I would catch small gudu fish and get it for him," Dinabandu, who later studied law and became a lawyer, recalls. This lawyer was the one who, upon the sudden death of Jaipal, picked up the spade and shovel to dig the final resting house for him beside his mother's grave in his native Takra when everyone else's hand just did not move.

Jaipal used to travel so extensively and frequently that people found him in their vicinity every other day. They heard him so frequently that myriad folklores of his speeches and manners made the rounds of the region.

Hante Rourkela, ne te Bandomunda
Marang Gomke Jaipal radio khutao keda
(There in Rourkela and here in Bandomunda,
Marang Gomke Jaipal has the radio hung on a pillar)

Jaipal's Rooster caught the imagination of the ordinary people and lakhs of them instantly connected with him in a very natural way. He told them about the bigger goal and they understood him. With the Rooster as symbol of Adibasi Mahasabha, and then of Jharkhand Party, Jaipal became a hero of his people, championing their cause. When he captained the British India in hockey Olympiad, no one had any inkling that the young man given to comforts of elite ruling class, would one day tour the dusty villages of his native land with a rooster on his shoulder. Jaipal had himself been re-born, accepting the call of his land. The Oxford educated man had learnt to become a *jungli*, speaking impeccably chaste Mundari, and equally chaste sadani, storing safe his Oxfordian English for the Parliament that he was soon set to move into.

Jaipal's candidates did well in the elections of 1946 and he had enough MLAs to ensure him entry into the Constituent Assembly and the Provisional Parliament. Since 1946, he remained a Member of Parliament till the end of his life, walking through many ups and downs.

❐

4
Constituent Assembly and Jaipal

You cannot teach my people democracy...
Sona leka disumea, lipi
Okoren lelada, lipi?
Rupaleka gamaia, lipi,
Chimaire Chinadam?
Sonaleka disumea, babu
Doinsareign nelada, babu
Rupaleka gamaia, babu
Kukuraing Chinada.
Sona leka disumea, lipi,
Mapatanakoa lipi,
Rupaleka gamaia lipiko
Tupuingtana. (Mundari folklore)

*

English Translation

(O Where's the land that shines like gold?
Say where such land didst see.
O where the land like silver gleams?
Say where such land may be.
Ah! Bright as burnished gold the land
Doisa realm I found.
There gleams the land as silver white,
In Kukhra all around.
But in that golden land, my dove,

Oh! Men each other slay!
And in that land of silver, love,
Oh! Deadly arrows fly!)

Jaipal Singh reached the Constituent Assembly and eventually became a very powerful voice of the Adibasis, the aboriginals. His unparalleled oratory skill and penetrating knowledge of subjects made him an enviable Parliamentarian. He had first hand experience of things he spoke about and this made his speeches emphatic and different. A gifted orator, Jaipal could just speak on any serious issue of the day in a lucid and attractive manner, engaging logic and coherence. Documents, particularly the collection of speeches he made at the Constituent Assembly, stands proof to his oratory skill. In the Constituent Assembly, Jaipal represented the Adivasi people of the country and called them as 'Never United and Scattered Adivasis'. Some writers put it as 'the never united and scattered adivasis were represented by Oxfordian and Olympian India hockey captain Jaipal Singh'. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Drafting Committee Chairman was not in a mood for reservation facility of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes—he had his own reason; and it was Jaipal who is supposed to have pushed the idea single-handedly in the Constituent Assembly. The speeches revealed the man Jaipal was, and the points he stood for, knowing very well that he was a lone voice of his kind in that huge gathering of towering intellectuals. He chose to be the voice of a meek and weak people that other members thought very poorly of, and even detested to hear about.

Constituent Assembly of India – Volume I
Thursday, the 19th December, 1946

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. Chairman (The Honourable Dr. Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

Programme of Business

Mr. Chairman: Yesterday I told the Members that I would be able to give some decision with regard to the programme of the work of the Assembly this morning. I have been considering that

matter and some Members have seen me also in that connection. The work we have to get through is this. We have this Resolution, which we are considering. Then we have got the rules to pass…

"All power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people."

…

Mr. Jaipal Singh (Bihar: General): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on behalf of millions of unknown hordes—yet very important—of unrecognised warriors of freedom, the original people of India who have variously been known as backward tribes, primitive tribes, criminal tribes and everything else. Sir, I am proud to be a *Jungli*, that is the name by which we are known in my part of the country. Living as we do in the jungles, we know what it means to support this Resolution. On behalf of more than 30 millions of the Adibasis (*cheers*), I support it not merely because it may have been sponsored by a leader of the Indian National Congress. I support it because it is a resolution which gives expression to sentiments that throb in every heart in this country. I have no quarrel with the wording of this Resolution at all. As a *jungli*, as an Adibasi, I am not expected to understand the legal intricacies of the Resolution. But my common sense tells me, the common sense of my people tells me that every one of us should march in that road of freedom and fight together. Sir, if there is any group of Indian people that has been shabbily treated it is my people. They have been disgracefully treated and neglected for the last 6,000 years.

The history of the Indus Valley civilization, a child of which I am, shows quite clearly that it is the new comers--most of you here are intruders as far as I am concerned--it is the new comers who have driven away my people from the Indus Valley to the jungle fastnesses. This Resolution is not going to teach Adibasis democracy. *You cannot teach democracy to the tribal people; you have to learn democratic ways from them*. They are the most democratic people on earth. What my people require, Sir, is not adequate safeguards as Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has put it. They

require protection from Ministers, that is [the] position today. We do not ask for any special protection. We want to be treated like every other Indian.

There is the problem of Hindustan. There is position of Pakistan. There is the problem of Adibasis. If we all shout in different militant directions, feel in different ways, we shall end up in *Kabarastan*. The whole history of my people is one of continuous exploitation and dispossession by the non-aboriginals of India punctuated by rebellions and disorder, and yet I take Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru at his word. I take you all at your word that now we are going to start a new chapter, a new chapter of Independent India where there is equality of opportunity, where no one would be neglected.

There is no question of caste in my society. We are all equal. Have we not been casually treated by the Cabinet Mission, more than 30 million people completely ignored? It is only a matter of political window-dressing that today we find six tribal members in this Constituent Assembly. How is it? What has the Indian National Congress done for our fair representation?

Is there going to be any provision in the rules whereby it may be possible to bring in more Adibasis and by Adibasis I mean, Sir, not only men but women also?

There are too many men in the Constituent Assembly. We want more women, more women of the type of Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit who has already won a victory in America by destroying this racialism.

My people have been suffering for 6,000 years because of your racism, the racism of the Hindus and everybody else. Sir, there is the question of the Advisory Committee. My people, the Adibasis, they are also Indians, are deeply concerned about what is going to happen about the selection to the Advisory Committee. When I was first given a copy of the Memorandum, as first submitted by the Cabinet Mission, in section 20 the language read as follows:-

"The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation

(mark you 'should contain full representation') of the interests affected...

Now, when I read a reprint of that in Command Paper 6821, the same paragraph 20 seems to read differently. Here it reads:

"The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas will contain due representation."

Sardar Harnam Singh (Punjab: Sikh): Just a misprint. The original text contained the words "should contain full representation of the interests affected."

The Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru: Is it so?

Sardar Harnam Singh: I am definite.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: I want to be quite clear on that point. I think there has been juggling of words going on to deceive us. I have heard of resolutions and speeches galore assuring Adibasis of a fair deal.

If history had to teach me anything at all, I should distrust this Resolution, but I do not. Now we are on a new road. Now we have simply got to learn to trust each other. And I ask friends who are not present with us today that they should come in, they should trust us and we in turn must learn to trust them. We must create a new atmosphere of confidence among ourselves.

I regret there has been too much talk in this House in terms of parties and minorities. Sir, I do not consider my people a minority. We have already heard on the floor of the House this morning that the Depressed Classes also consider themselves as Adibasis, the original inhabitants of this country. If you go on adding people like the exterior castes and others who are socially in no man's land, we are not a minority. In any case we have prescriptive rights that no one dare deny. I need say no more. I am convinced that not only the Mover of this Resolution, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, but every one here will deal with us justly.

It is only by dealing justly, and not by a proclamation of empty words, that we will be able to shape a Constitution which will mean real freedom.

I have heard pronouncements made by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in different parts of the country. More particularly was I impressed by what he said during his visit to Assam during the

elections. When he was in Ramgarh, I invited him to come and address the sixty thousand Adibasis who were assembled at Ranchi, only 30 miles away. Unfortunately, work kept him busy and he was unable to come. Very fine things have been said. Now, Sir, I would like, for example, to quote, if I may, what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said at Ramgarh:

"The Congress does not want to dictate its own terms. It admits the fullest right of the minorities to formulate their own safeguards. So far as the settlement of their problem is concerned, it would not depend on the word of the majority."

Sir, the solutions to the various problems of the Adibasis are obvious to my mind and these solutions will have to be thrashed out at some later date. Here I can only adumbrate what is my faith in what seems to be the just solution and it is by a re-alignment by a daring redistribution of provinces. The case of my own area has been very well put, Sir, by yourself when you were the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Ramgarh session of the Congress (1940). May I just read out the words of cheer that you gave them?

"That portion of Bihar where this great assemblage is meeting today has its own peculiarities. In beauty it is matchless. Its history too is wonderful. These parts are inhabited very largely by those who are regarded as the original inhabitants of India. Their civilisation differs in many respects from the civilisation of other people. The discovery of old articles shows that this civilisation is very old. The Adibasis belong to a different stock from the Aryans and people of the same stock are spread towards the south-east of India in the many islands to a great distance. Their ancient culture is preserved in these parts to a considerable extent, perhaps more than elsewhere."

Sir, I say you cannot teach my people democracy. May I repeat that it is the advent of Indo-Aryan hordes that have been destroying the very vestiges of democracy. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in his latest book puts the case very nicely and I think I may quote it.

In his 'Discovery of India' he says, talking of the Indus Valley Civilisation, and later centuries "There were many Tribal Republics, some of them covering large areas."

Sir, there will again be many tribal republics, republics which will be in the vanguard of the battle for Indian freedom. I heartily support the Resolution and hope that the members who are now outside will have the same faith in their fellow countrymen. Let us fight for freedom together, sitting together and working together. Then alone, we shall have real freedom. (Applause).

Mr. Chairman: I want to say just one word. The reprint of the Statement of May 16th, 1946 was taken exactly as it was presented to the houses of Parliament.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: The one that was given to me bears the signature of the Governor of Bihar.

Mr. Chairman: I do not know who has made the alteration. This book contains the Statement as was presented to the Parliament in the Command Papers.

Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee (Bengal: General): May I know what is the correct word Sir ? 'Due' or 'Full'.

Mr, Chairman: "Due" is the word I find printed.

Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee: The word "Full" has been used in the book given to us.

Mr. Chairman: There seems to be some confusion. I have to find out how it has arisen. This is exactly what was presented to the Parliament.

Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee: The book we have got, Sir...

Mr. Chairman: I shall make enquiries about it. The Statement as it is printed in this book is, I understand, exactly as it was presented to the Parliament.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: Before presenting to the Parliament, the word was "Full".

....

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock, on Saturday, the 21st December 1946.

-(www.parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol1p9.htm)

This address of Jaipal in which he takes the Constituent Assembly head-on and says that democracy has been in the very

blood of an Adivasi, has been oft quoted. The only *jungli* of the Constituent Assembly, Jaipal advocated women representation and gender equality in the House at a time when others probably had never thought of it even in their passing mind. Even today the Indian politics loves only to discuss reservation for women in the Parliament, and nothing beyond this happens. Coming from a gender-equal society that did not know caste discrimination, such a revolutionary thought was expected of him alone, in the Constituent Assembly. What however, stands out is his genuine worry for his 'my people' who had been exploited and neglected for millennia in a land to which they gave the idea of 'republic' at a very early age of human civilization. Remnants of this system could still be found in the present day tribal society. Jaipal also pleads for 'protection from ministers' for his adivasi people, as if he could see such a future coming with a situation characterized by exploitation and oppression by the government machinery and powers, rather than anything else. Many intellectuals today engage themselves to wholly deny the very position of the aboriginals as a different and early group of people distinct from the new arrivals, despite several documents and religious scriptures pointing to it. Even the writings of leaders like Pundit Nehru and pronouncements of Dr. Rajendra Prasad clearly stated so, as can be seen from this speech of Jaipal in which he quoted these leaders. However, the cultural history of India suggests that Indian culture has been one of composite culture, in that it has emerged over years upon the coming together of several cultures—which makes it all the more rich and enticing. Jaipal was a fearless speaker and he spoke his mind, without ever trying to hide any of his sentiments, or clothe his displeasure over something, with the language of so-called civility. He called spade a spade, and many liked him for this quality of his, while a lot many just were simply afraid to hear the truth. This quality of plain-speaking came from two background—first, his Munda origin where people plain-speak and detest any kind of beating around the bush; and second, from his being a sportsman. Though he was raised in the sophisticated Britain society, the Munda in him always had the upper hand over the Oxfordian in him. And he loved it, he lived

it. Speeches he delivered at the Constituent Assembly only go to prove it further—

Constituent Assembly of India – Volume II
Friday, the 24th January, 1947

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Hon'ble Dr. Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

Mr. President: We shall commence the proceedings now. When, we rose day before yesterday, we were sitting in Committee to discuss the Budget. There are certain Resolutions which have to be placed before the House. I would suggest that we first take those Resolutions and dispose of them and then, later on, if we have time, shall go into Committee again and discuss the Budget.

I hope Members approve of this....

Election of the Advisory Committee

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: Sir, I beg leave to make the motion standing in my name which runs thus:

"This Assembly resolves that in pursuance of paragraph 20 of the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946, an Advisory Committee be constituted as hereinafter set out

1. (a) The Advisory Committee shall consist of not more than 68 members who may include persons who are not members of the Assembly.

(b) (i) It shall consist initially of 52 members who shall be elected by the Assembly in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

ii) The Assembly may elect in such manner as the President may deem appropriate up to 7 members.

(c)The President may at any one time or at different times nominate members to the Committee not exceeding 9.

2. The Advisory Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees to prepare schemes for the Administration of the North-Western Tribal Areas, the North-Eastern Tribal Areas and the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas. Each of such Sub Committees may co-opt not more than 2 members from the particular tribal territory

under its consideration for the time being, to against it in its work in relation to that territory.

3. The Advisory Committee may appoint other Sub-Committees from time to time as it may deem necessary.

4. The Advisory Committee shall submit the final report to the Union Constituent Assembly within three months and may submit interim reports from time to time.

5. Casual vacancies in the Advisory Committee shall be filled as soon as possible after they occur in the manner in which the seat in respect of which the vacancy had arisen was originally filled.

6. As they know, provision has to be made for the determination of fundamental rights, the rights of minorities and for the administration of Tribal and Backward Areas.

The number of representatives has been fixed with due regard to the tasks that lie in front of this Committee. Ours is a vast country and the numbers living here now exceed 400 millions…

There is provision for 72 members, but originally it was 68. Hon'ble Members know that there is provision to be made for citizens' rights…

So we have provided in this Resolution for an initial Committee of 52 members, but according to the amendment which will be moved by Mr. Munshi, the number is to be 50 and not 52. Out of these 50 only 12 will be representatives of the general sections. Others will represent the minorities and the Tribal and Excluded Areas, The minorities will be represented in the following manner:

The Hindus of Bengal, Punjab, N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and Sind will have 7 representatives

The Muslims of the 7 Provinces of U.P.

Bihar, C.P., Madras, Bombay, Assam and Orissa will have similarly 7 representatives

The Depressed Classes or the Schedule Castes will have 7 representatives

The Sikhs will have 6

The Indians Christians will have 4

Paris will have 3

Anglo - Indians will have 3

and the Tribal areas and Excluded Areas 13

In addition there will be 10 nominations by the President. In the Resolution the number is higher…

Let us hope that this Advisory committee will bring concord and amity, goodwill and trust, in place of mutual strife, that occupies the political stage to-day and that as a result of the deliberations of this Committee we will have prepared the ground for Independent India for which we live, for which many have died and, for which alone life is worth living. (Loud Cheers.)

Mr. President: Sardar Harnam Singh is going to second this.

Sardar Harnam Singh (Punjab: Sikh): Mr. President the Advisory Committee which has to be formed…

Mr. Jaipal Singh (Bihar: General): Mr. President, now that the names have been combined in the Resolution of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, I feel I must say a few words from the tribal point of view. I strongly resent the insinuation by Pandit Pant. He said that the Tribal Areas and minorities look to a foreign country.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: I never said so. Please do not put in my mouth words I never said.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: We look to our own countrymen. We look to our own leaders to give us a fair and square deal. We have not gone abroad. We did not go to London for negotiations. We did not go to meet the Cabinet Mission for provisions for our rights. We look only to our own countrymen to give us a fair and equitable deal. For the last six thousand years we have been shabbily treated.

Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy (Bengal: General): How many years?

Mr. Jaipal Singh: Six thousand years, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, which is the time you, Non-Adibasis have been in this country.

Sir, the mover and the seconder have indicated how the disposition, the distribution has been made in this Advisory Committee. This is a matter of life and death for the tribal people in particular. I congratulate the Indian National Congress leaders; I congratulate also those minority communities who have been able to get more seats than are due to them numerically. That cannot be denied. Number for number, the Sikhs, the Christians, the Anglo-Indians and the Parsis have been given more than is their due. I do not grudge them all this; but, the fact remains that they have been

given many more seats than is their due, whereas when we come to my people, the real and most ancient people of this country, the position is different. But I do not grumble. For my purpose, it would be quite enough to have Panditji only; but he is not a member. I would entrust the future of every tribal people in this country, in the hands of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and rather be not there myself. Let me assure you, that we are not dependent on numbers--the number of votes that will be given in the Advisory Committee. We have been inarticulate. I led no deputation to Sardar Patel, or to you, Mr. President, about our rights, about our claims and about our dues. I leave it to the good sense of the House and of the Advisory Committee, that, a long, last, they will right the wrongs of six thousand years. In another place, once when I said that a particular group of our Indian nation had been heavily weighted, my remarks were resented by that particular group, I tell you that it does not worry us at all if the Sikhs get 60 seats in this Particular Advisory Committee, or anywhere else. I congratulate them, we thank the Indian National Congress for saying that the minority question cannot be over-rated, as Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant said. But has it been over-rated as far as the tribals are concerned? Can it be honestly said that you have in any way over-rated their position? I am not pleading for anymore seats; I have not submitted any amendment, I am not moving any amendment, but I must draw the attention of this House and of this country, if I may say so, that here we are all on trial. Hitherto it has been very easy for us to say it is the British who have kept you in a zoo by making for you Partially Excluded Areas and Excluded Areas. Are you behaving any differently? I ask this question. I ask the Advisory Committee. I find my own name in it. While I find my own name in it, I am bound to point out that there is no name of any tribal woman in the Advisory Committee. How has that been left out? There is no tribal woman member in the Advisory Committee. That never occurred to the people who were responsible for the selection of members of the Committee. I am not saying that she should be included, but it is significant that the thing has not been seriously considered. Similarly, as I repeat thirteen or whatever the figure is that has been fixed-I accept that,

I do not say any more, but I do want to expose the ignorance that is exposed in the suggestion of this figure, or for that matter, in tile nomination of the Tribal Areas members. Look at the disposition of the tribal population throughout India, I have no quarrel with the muddling that has been made in the census enumeration at every decennial reckoning. The latest figure is 254 lakhs, I accept that. Now in that we find that the largest tribal group in India are the Munda-speaking tribe. If you add up their 1941 figures, you will find that they are something like 43 lakhs. The next in magnitude are the Gonds. Now we have been given a Gond representative; I am glad there is one. The next come Bhils, 23 lakhs. No Bhil is on this Committee. Like that, we go on to Oraons, with 11 lakhs, there is no Oraon on this Committee. Mr. President, time is valuable. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru elsewhere said that every day we take it costs something like Rs. 10,000. I think the life of 25 million tribals is worth more than Rs. 10,000 a day. This is an opportunity where I must have my say, if you will permit me. I note also that, for some reason or other, there is no tribal member at all in the Fundamental Rights Committee.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: There is no separate Committee. There is only one Committee.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: In the speech you have envisaged that some were going to be put in the committee to deal with the fundamental rights of citizens.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: No. That depends on the Advisory Committee. It may form such Sub-Committees as it likes.

Mr. Jaipal Singh: Very well. I accept that. As I say, there is no way to include every tribal group. There are altogether listed in India in the 1941 census 177 tribes. Obviously, it would be impossible to have 177 members, But whatever the number that has been allotted-I say I accept that, Mr. President, but I am, in duty bound to my people, to point out to the House that we would have to deal with this tribal question, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru told us when speaking on the Independent Sovereign Republic Resolution,-that this problem would have to be dealt with imaginatively and emotionally. This House is on trial; let us see what happens.

-(parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol2p4.htm)

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Jaipal Singh had an unwavering faith in the Constituent Assembly and the new democracy that was going to shape up in India post-Independence. In his speeches he chose to focus only the tribal people and their problems, because it was he who had to do it as most others did not care about the subject. He however had complete faith in Pundit Nehru with regard to the safeguarding of tribal interest. He believed that Nehru alone would suffice to safeguard tribal interest in the vast country that was torn between interests of different groups, and that Nehru just could not do anything wrong on the subject. That was when the country was yet to be Independent. It was this faith that made Jaipal merge his Jharkhand Party with the Congress later, thinking that he would achieve his life's goal of Statehood for Jharkhand with the help of Nehru. 'I will achieve the goal of Jharkhand beating the drum of the Congress now', he had famously said on the issue of merger. Jaipal however had little inkling that Pundit Nehru in his role as the Prime Minister of Independent India would himself be torn between several interests, and pay little interest to Jaipal's dream of Jharkhand.

Jaipal Singh was a member in the Constituent Assembly of India from Akhil Bharatiya Adibasi Mahasabha and he truly represented the tribal population of the entire country. While he spoke for the adivasis, his deliberations summed up problems and challenges of the entire tribal population of new India. He very well knew that if the Constituent Assembly did not specially discuss tribal matters, at the Provincial levels the matter will not get more than a flimsy attention.

For the Constituent Assembly, Jaipal presented a report on Chotanagpur and placed it before the Assembly's Advisory Committee on March 15, 1948. The report stated:

Chotanagpur States

Their Merger and Provincial Integration

—By Jaipal Singh

(President, All India Adibasi Mahasabha, 1948)

Chotanagpur States: their Merger and Provincial Integration

The All India Adibasi Mahasabha is the name given in 1938 to the Chhota Nagpur Unnati Samaj, which was founded in 1920. As its original title is, the Mahasabha stands for the moral, material and spiritual advancement of the Adibasis throughout India, and in the Chotanagpur Plateau in particular. In its earlier years, its activities were directed to economic welfare work chiefly, but in 1938, it turned its attention to fighting elections, provincial, district and municipal. District Board elections were contested in Singbhum and Ranchi, and, in both these districts, where candidates had been put up on the Adibasi ticket, the mahasabha gained easy victories. In Singbhum, it captured 22 out of 25 seats, and the present Chairman of the District Board is an Adibasi. In Ranchi District, only 16 seats could be captured from the total of 25, but despite a clear elected majority, a nominated member, who is not of the majority party, is the Chairman. Last year, at the Hazaribagh District Board Elections, the 'Ramgarh' candidates were supported, and in the only two Districts which were contested on the Jharkhand platform, the Adibasi Mahasabha polled the majority of the votes. There are now four MLAs in the Bihar Assembly and, with their strength, there is an Adibasi Member in the Constituent Assembly of India.

While more is heard of political activities, the Mahasabha has continued to carry on its economic programmes. There are grain goals, run on a cooperative basis; there are small shops managed with entirely Adibasi capital; generally, competent persons have been encouraged to launch upon trade. In industrial areas, the mahasabha interests itself in the Trade Union Movement, and by virtue of its great following, it has to be reckoned with by recognized Unions. In order to give a cultural bias, the Mahasabha runs the Adibasi Dhumkudia at Kanke. There is a women' section called Mahila Sangh, which is conducted entirely by Adibasi women. During the last war, the Mahasabha, in severe contrast to the Indian National Congress, supported war efforts. It recruited, literally, thousands and thousands of men, combatant and non-combatant, skilled and unskilled, for all arms of the Forces. Several

Adibasis rose to be officers. Some Adibasi Labour Battalions did so well that they were converted into combatant units and, today, all the Bihar Regiments are manned entirely by Chhota Nagpur aboriginals. Women also did not lag behind. About three hundred joined the Women Auxiliary Corps (India), some becoming officers and, an equal number became nurses. The largest exodus from the Chotanagpur Plataeu was the construction of the new Burma Road. Altogether, the Chhotanagpur Plateau was a beehive of war industries and war efforts. Ranchi District, in particular, was the largest Occupation Area in India. The net result of this has been to raise Jharkhand from being comparatively unknown and unexplored to being a percocious 'debutant' in the political 'Courts' of India. The return of the Services personnel has worked heavily on Aboriginal outlook.

All along, the Adibasi Mahasabha has endeavoured to work on nationalistic lines. It has gone out of its way to court friendship and collaboration with the major political parties like Forward Bloc, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League, Momin Conference, Land Holders Association and so forth. But, for obvious reasons, although non-Aborginals were always welcome to join the Adibasi Movement, the Mahasabha has been overwhelmingly Adibasi in character. Recently, 'Adibasi' has retreated into the background and Jharkhand is used more and more within the confines of the Chhotanagpur Plateau.

It has become an All-India Movement. Its greatest achievement is the universal acceptance of the word 'Adibasi' for 'primitive', 'jungli', 'backward', 'aboriginal', 'anarya', 'Adi-Hindu', and 'Kolarian'. There are allied organizations in almost all the Adibasi Tracts of India. People, particularly political enemies, have tried to accuse the Adibasi Mahasabha of being a communal institution. It has never been communal in the sense of Muslim League, the Panthic Board or the Hindu Mahasabha. Adibasis are of two kinds: converted and unconverted. The unconverted have not been much affected by the impact of new comers and their new religions. The converted are the ones who have been proselytized into Islam, Christianity and Hinduism, but, it is none-the-less true that various Hindu Missions have been competing with Christian

Missionaries for converts. Quite apart from the efforts of direct Missionary endeavours, there has been an imperceptible change in faith. There are Hinduized and semi-Hinduized Adibasis. It is difficult to say whether the Touchables and Untouchables and several exterior castes of the Hindu fold are to be considered as fully converts or otherwise. Whatever their faith, ethnically, the Aboriginal people of this country, that is, the Pre-Aryan settlers must be called 'Adibasis'. The 1941 Census gives them as 25,441,489, but, in the light of what has been already said, this figure out to be quadrupled.

Adibasis vary in their degree or organization and development. There are advanced areas as well as backward tracts. Adibasi tracts, generally speaking, have been neglected by all political parties, because they were of no important in the Indian political scene, because, mostly being in inaccessible parts, they could, with comparative impunity, be left in isolation. This is true as much of British India as of the Indian States. There are 176 recorded tribes. Some of these like Santals, Mundas, the Oraons, the Gonds and the Bhils, have highly developed languages. The ungeographical distribution of the Provinces has disintegrated into several tribes. The Santals, the second largest tribal group in India, are split up between Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, for example. Free India should set itself to the task of re-integrating scattered Adibasis.

The merger of the States and their integration to the Provinces at once raises the question of the re-integration of Tribal Groups. The Chhotanagpur Plateau has, easily, the largest and the most compact numbers of Adibasis, and, there are many States in the Plateau. The Chhotanagpur States numbering eleven (Seraikela, Kharsawan, Gangpur, Jashpur, Keonjhar, Bonai, Bamra, Sarguja, Udaipur and Changbhakar) cover an area of 21,173 square miles and have a population of 2,446,031. These States are a quarter of the rest of the population of the Plateau which is in British India.

Two of the States, Seraikela and Kharsawan, were known formerly as Singhbhum States. Kharsawan was a dependency of Seraikela till 1825 when its dependence was waived by the British Government and since then it has been independent of Seraikela.

The Eastern States Agency was re-constituted in 1936 and, as far as the 11 Chhotanagpur States were concerned, they were committed, five of them to the Chhattisgarh States Agency and the remaining to the Orissa States Agency; but throughout, they have been known as "Chhotanagpur States".

The Chhotanagpur States in Chhattisgarh State Agency are: Changbhakar, 2) Jashpur, 3) Korea, 4) Surguja, 5) Udaipur; and six in the Orissa States Agency are: Bamra, 2) Bonai, 3) Gangpur, 4) Kharsawan, 5) Seraikela, 6) Keonjhar.

Geographically, historically, administratively, linguistically and ethnically, it is inconvertible that they always have been, and continue to be, part and parcel of the Chhotanagpur Plateau Life and Administration, where ever the Plateau as a whole might be, with Bihar as it now is, with Bengal as it was before, or by itself, as might well be. Since there have been clamant demands of territory grabbers from Orissa and Central Provinces, it is as well to examine all the five tests.

1. Geographical: No one in his senses would deny that these States are in the Plateau and should remain in it. Why have they been called Chhotanagpur States? Communications to and from them, trade and hundred other things are clear proof of their table-land unity and identity.

2. Historical: The records are there to show the long connection these States have had with Chhotanagpur Administration. There is plenty to show they were under the Commissioner of Chhotanagpur Division. Leaders of Orissa and the Central Provinces, in their lust for territory, want to vitiate historical facts.

3. Administrative: the fact that the Commissioner of Chhotanagpur Division was responsible for the States is proof enough that they were all Chhotanagpur. Why were they put under the Commissioner? Because, the people inhabiting them are similar, the Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act is the model for similar Acts in all the 11 Chhotanagpur States.

4. Linguistic: Much has been made of the linguistic argument. Were linguistic enumeration reliable, there would be some justification for pinning faith in this hackneyed argument.

The truth is that the Adibasis are generally, bilingual. The santhal speaks Santhali as well as Bangali; the Munda speaks Mundari as well as Hindi and Gangwari; the Oraon speaks Oraon as well as Hindi or Sadri; and so forth. The machinations of territory-grabbing show their effect on the linguistic enumeration. The five Chhotanagpur States in the Chhattisgarh States Agency do not raise any linguistic dispute, but, for the six Chhotanagpur States in the Orissa States Agency linguistic figures are not available and on this score, Oriyas have the audacity to claim that these six States are Oriya-speaking. Because the Ruler and their courtiers speak Oriya as well, it does not follow that their subjects are also Oriya-speaking. The Nizam of Hyderabad would have to be encouraged to acede to Pakistan were the arguments of the Oriyas to be accepted. Attempts have been made to force Oriya as a court language without avail. Feeling against the enforcement of Oriya has been so violent that parents have refused to send their children to Oriya-teaching schools. In States like Kharsawan and Seraikela, the people refused to listen to Oriya leaders. The blunt fact that none of the 11 Chhotanagpur States is Oriya speaking.

5. Ethnical: The most powerful argument. The anthropological survey is there and the opinion of the scientists should not be tampered with.

6. Vox Populi: This sixth argument should be the deciding factor. Do the people want to go to Orissa, to the Central Provinces or do they want to return to Chhotanagpur Administration in the Province of Bihar? This is a clear issue. Let the people decide. Let there be a plebiscite. Are Orissa and the Central provinces willing to face this most honest method of settlement? The Honourable Prime Minister of the Dominion of India and his colleagues have assured the country that the will of the people would be always respected. This being the case, there is no room for argument, no need for compromise, no occasion for hangling with human lives. Let the people themselves decide. That is the best and the only solution.

The logic and parametres Jaipal Singh engaged in his demand for separate State of Jharkhand has ever since been taken to be the base around which the later day's statehood movement rallied

behind. Tribal India has been a colourful and varied one with many tribes and as many languages, but they were strikingly similar on some points which Jaipal was well aware of, and managed to place before the Constituent Assembly. People who did not want a separate political and geographical identity for the tribal people, harped in the flimsy and insignificant differences, completely overlooking the common factors of the tribal community. (Mahto, p.661)

Constituent Assembly of India – Volume VII Wednesday, the 24th November, 1948

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Ten of the Clock, Mr. Vice-President (Dr. H. C. Mookherjee), in the Chair.

Condolence on the Death of Shri Kanyalal Manana

Mr. Vice-President (Dr. H. C. Mookherjee): I understand that Shri Kanyalal Manana who was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Madhya Bharat died some time ago. This was announced in newspapers and then the news had to be verified. It has been verified now. May I request the Members to stand up for a minute in order to pay respect to his memory?

(All the Members stood up in their seats.)

Mr. Vice-President: I wish that the House should authorise me to send the usual message of condolence to the members of his family.

Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Vice-President: We shall commence today's proceedings with the consideration of the particular article with which we are concerned today in the draft Constitution. The introduction of the Bill will be taken up after a little while.

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena (United Provinces: General):I am tabling an amendment which is an amendment of Mr. Mahavir Tyagi's. I hope it will be acceptable to him, because in his amendment, he has not included the words 'except for medicinal purposes'; I think that if the amendment of Mr. Mahavir Tyagi is accepted as amended by my amendment, it would become much

better. I wish Dr. Ambedkar to accept my amendment which is mentioned in No. 86 of list IV.

Sir, I beg to move:

"That at the end of article 38, the following be substituted:

'and shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the comsumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs which are injurious to health except for medicinal purposes'."

...

Shri Jaipal Singh (Bihar: General): Mr. President, Sir, I do not know whether I shall be in order in suggesting to you that this amendment be postponed until such time as we come to the consideration of the recommendations that the Advisory Committee has made particularly in regard to the Tribal Areas. Now the recommendations of the Advisory Committee as well as the Sub-Committees have not been given a chance for full discussion on the floor of this House. Therefore, I do not at this stage, want to go into details but I am bound to oppose the Resolution and amendments of this sort. We have heard such a lot of pious language about a democratic State, of a secular State, of our being voluntarily opposed to the establishment of the democracy in India. Here, Sir, I submit, by the back door we are trying to interfere with the religious rights of the most ancient people of this country. You may laugh. Excess in everything is wrong. If you eat too much rice, it is bad for you. There are so many other things that you take in excess. But, if you take anything in its right quantity, it is good for you. Drink certainly is one of the things taken in excess which does no one good, but, let us remember that we should not be hasty in putting into the Constitution anything which is going to work for more bitterness than there is already. During our discussions in the Advisory Committee, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was pleased to put a direct question to me and it was this - "*Kya yah mazhabi chij hai*". Is it really a religious right? On that occasion, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Honourable Sardar Patel gave me an opportunity to explain what the position was. Now, as far as the Adibasis are concerned, no religious function can be performed without the use of rice beer.

The word here used – the phrase used is 'intoxicating drinks'. Sir, that is a very vague way of describing the thing, and, also 'injurious to health'. My friend Prof. Shibban Lal has tried to put forward the argument of economic efficiency. He thinks that if prohibition were installed in this country, the economic efficiency of the workers would be enhanced. I dare say it would be. But what I want to tell him is that it is not merely the industrial workers whom he has particularly in mind, that are affected. I would like to point out to him the position of the very poor people, the Adibasis, and, members who come from West Bengal and other places will bear me out in what I say about the Adibasis who are in such large numbers in West Bengal, Southern Bihar, Orissa and other places. In West Bengal, for instance, it would be impossible for paddy to be transplanted if the Santhal does not get his rice beer. These ill clad men, without even their barest wants satisfied, have to work knee-deep in water throughout the day, in drenching rain and in mud. What is it in the rice beer that keeps them alive? I wish the medical authorities in this country would carry out research in their laboratories to find out what it is that the rice beer contains, of which the Adibasis need so much and which keeps them against all manner of diseases.

Well, Sir, I am not opposing this amendment because I want drink to increase in this country. I am all for seeing to it, and, seeing vigorously to it, that the Adibasis do not injure themselves by this drink habit. But that is quite apart from the religious needs and religious privileges; we shall educate them to lead a life of temperance. I am all for that. But this amendment is a vicious one. It seeks to interfere with my religious right. Whether you put it in the Constitution or not, I am not prepared to give up my religious privileges. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Vice-President: Order, order.

Shri Jaipal Singh: Sir, if you will forgive me, I would rather explain all this when we come to the recommendations which the Advisory Committee has made in regard to the Scheduled Tribes and others. This is not the proper time for me to talk in extenso. Here I would only point out to the honourable

Members here that it is better not to be hasty, and, I would request you that this amendment be deferred until such time as we come to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in regard to the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Areas; because, if we decide the thing at this stage, we shall be doing ourselves wrong. We shall be unfair to a very important and, at the present moment, politically helpless minority. There are hardly a dozen of them who can speak on behalf of them here, though they are thirty millions. This is a decision which must rest with the wishes of the people themselves. We are going through difficult times. Let us not make matters any more difficult. Sir, I need say nothing more than that I am opposed to this amendment, and my humble request to you would be that the further consideration of this amendment be taken up after we have come to a decision with regard to the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Areas. (www.parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol7p12.htm)

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Reply —

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:- .....Sir, I was quite surprised at the speech delivered by my friend Mr. Jaipal Singh. He said that this matter ought not to be discussed at this stage, but should be postponed till we take up for consideration the report of the Advisory Committee on Tribal Areas. If he had read the Draft Constitution, particularly the Sixth Schedule, paragraph 12, he would have found that ample provision is made for safeguarding the position of the tribal people with regard to the question of prohibition. The scheme with regard to the tribal areas is that the law made by the State, whether by a province or by the Centre, does not automatically apply to that particular area. First of all, the law has to be made. Secondly, the District Councils or the Regional Councils which are established under this Constitution for the purposes of the administration of the affairs of these areas are given the power to say whether a particular law made by a province or by the Centre should be applied to that particular region inhabited by the tribal people or not, and particular mention is made with regard to the law relating to prohibition. I shall just

read out sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 12 which occurs on page 184 of the Draft Constitution. It says:

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Constitution –

(a) no Act of the legislature of the State in respect of any of the matters specified in paragraph 3 of this Schedule as matters with respect to which a District Council or a Regional Council may make laws, and no Act of the Legislature of the State prohibition or restricting the consumption of any non-distilled alcoholic liquor shall apply to any autonomous district or autonomous region unless in either case the District Council for such district or having jurisdiction over such region by public notification so directs, and the District Council in giving such direction with respect to any Act may direct that the Act shall in its application to such district or region or any part thereof have effect subject to such exceptions or modifications as it thinks fit;"

Now, I do not know what more my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh, wants than the provision in paragraph 12 of the Sixth Schedule. My fear is that he has not read the Sixth Schedule: if he had read it, he would have realised that even though the State may apply its law regarding prohibition in any part of the country, it has no right to make it applicable to the tribal areas without the consent of the District Councils or the Regional Councils.(ibid)

The Constituent Assembly was discussing the issue of complete prohibition of drinks (rice beer), but Jaipal was not in favour of this. His reason for this was again rooted in his Adivasi religious and social practice wherein rice beer played a very crucial role—from birth of a child to his death, in all the religious and social rituals. Rice beer, however, is not meant for getting completely inebriated with, as may be thought by the men and women who know little of the Tribal India. It plays mostly a ritualistic role, and nothing more.

Rice beer has an interesting legend behind in the tribal society of Central India. The legend (oral history) runs thus—

Singbonga, the Almighty created a boy and a girl and asked them to live in a forest that was full of trees and herbs. The trees bore the sweetest of fruits while the herbs were of medicinal value. The boy called the girl "sister" while she called him "brother" and they lived together like brother and sister. Singbonga was waiting for them to copulate so that the human race could multiply. But they would not.

Singbonga got anxious. If they continued to live like brother and sister, how would the human race multiply? One evening, He arrived at their home and inquired about their well-being. The two were very happy having him in their house.

"Where are the children gone?" the Singbonga asked the boy.

"Who? Children! There are no children in the house, only the two of us," replied the boy.

Singbonga was concerned. He called the girl and asked her to cook rice in a mud pot.

"Now cool it on a mat. When it gets cool enough, mix these herbs in it and put them all in another mud pot,"Singbonga said, handing over the herbs that he had brought along from the forest. "I will come to your house again after a week," He said and went away.

'The girl did as Singbonga had advised her.

'A week later, Singbonga returned to the house.

"Where is the mud pot?" He asked the girl.

"I have kept it in a corner of the house. Do you want to take a look at it?"

"Oh yes. Bring it," Singonga said.

The girl presented the mud pot to Him.

"Now take out the rice and mix it with some water," Singbonga instructed.

The girl did, creating a liquid.

Singbonga then divided the liquid into three in different three vessels. He drank from one vessel and asked the boy and the girl to drink from their own.

THIS WAS RICE BEER.

When the boy and the girl had drunk the rice beer, Singbonga got up from his seat and told them that He needed to leave now.

The boy and the girl then went to bed. Every night they slept on the same bed with a log placed as a barrier between them. But tonight they were restless, feeling the effects of the liquor.

At midnight, a bird started singing *chapu...chapu...chapu, chapu.*

The brother and sister woke up when they heard the bird's song. After a while when they tried to doze off, the bird started singing again.

"The bird is asking me to touch you," said the boy.

"Yah. I feel the same."

"But, how can I? There is a log in between us!"

"Simple. Cross over the log," said the girl.

"The boy crossed over and came closer to the girl. He touched her and started caressing her. The girl felt nice and asked him to do the same all over her body. Starting from her head, the boy slowly moved down, feeling each and every part of her. Then, the girl grabbed his hand, stopping him from moving any further.

The girl started to caress the boy in the same manner that he had done. Then, they were lost in ecstasy.

Nine months later, a child was born. Thus the brother and sister had become man and woman and their breed multiplied.

This is the reason why rice beer is served at every tribal wedding in memory of the first marriage on earth, which was officiated by none other than Singbonga Himself. This story is narrated at all marriage functions in signifying its importance, without a trace of vulgarism in it. As rice beer played important role in procreation, it continues to hold its ritualistic role in birth and death or any religious or social function. Without the rice beer, no religious or social function, including agricultural activities can ben

imagined in the tribal society of Central India; and Jaipal Singh was very much aware of it. In fact, such practice is true for tribal communities in the whole of India, including the North-East. Noted scholar and author of Encyclopaedia Mundarica J.B. Hoffman, S.J., also talks about it in his work.

Jaipal Singh, to put in his own words, was a 'proud *adibasi*' and a 'proud to be a *jungli*'. He was proud of his origin as a Munda. Few know that the word 'Munda' carries three different meanings: *Munda* as the name of a race (commonly known as Austro-Asiatic) who, according to scholars, happened to be ancient inhabitants of Indian sub-continent;Munda as the headman (chief) and Munda as the name a tribe within the Munda race. And, Jaipal truly represented these three in his persona. He engaged many in serious debates at the Constituent Assembly and his deliberations have been only of one their kind. On December 2, 1948 he engaged Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of Indian Constitution in a memorable debate.

Shri Jaipal Singh (Bihar: General): (On the article 13 on the Fundamental Rights)

> Mr. Vice-President, Sir. So far as I am concerned, this particular article in no way frightens me, although the various fundamental rights have been hedged in by so many exceptions. To me it is obvious that whatever we put into the Constitution, its value, its use to us will depend upon the way we work all these things. But there are one or two things on which I would like Dr. Ambedkar to enlighten me. The first point on which I would like his clarification is in regard to the amendment which he has moved, amendment No. 491, where in he seeks to substitute the word "aboriginal" by the word "scheduled". Sir, I am always at a disadvantage whenever anything affecting aboriginals has to be discussed at this stage for the obvious reason that the two reports of the Tribal Sub-

Committees have not been fully discussed on the floor of this House, with the result that the House has not been able to obtain its collective view point or arrive at a collective decision as has been the case with all the other articles, that is to say, articles which affect the non-tribals of our country.

Take the question of this word 'tribal'. As far as I know neither of the sub-committees had gone into the work of scheduling. I know it for a fact that the sub-committee of which I was a member did nothing of the sort and, in fact, bodily the Drafting Committee has just put into the Draft Constitution whatever obtained in the Government of India Act. Now, look at the list.

My second point that I want to have clarified is whether the advisory councils or the regional councils, which are envisaged in the recommendations of the two sub-committees, will operate outside the so-called scheduled areas. If they do not, then I want to know from Dr. Ambedkar what is going to happen to the Adibasis, who are in millions, outside those scheduled areas. As far as I can understand the language of the Constitution, the regional councils and the advisory councils are to advise the Governor to participate as it were in the legislation of the State only in regard to the scheduled areas. Well, once it is accepted that the regional councils and the advisory councils may operate also outside the Scheduled Areas then my point is met.

Take the case of West Bengal. In West Bengal, according to what is proposed, there shall be no Scheduled Areas; in West Bengal there are 16 lakhs of Adibasis. I want to know what is going to happen to them. There is no Regional Council; there will be no Advisory Council there. Who is going to advise the Governor in regard to their welfare, in regard to whatever should be done or should not be done, what

act may operate for them or against them? I think that is a point that has to be clarified.

Sir, the Tribes inventory that is in this Draft Constitution is most unsatisfactory. I will exemplify one or two cases. Sir, you yourself come from West Bengal. Bengal has been carved into three provinces, Bengal United, now West Bengal, Bihar and then Orissa. The British had their own arguments for their territorial boundaries. At the present moment, you know it only too well that none of these three provinces seems to be satisfied with the boundary alignment. West Bengal wants something of Bihar; Bihar also wants something of West Bengal. Orissa also is clamouring for some more territory from Bihar. That is the present political situation, but, how does it affect the Adibasis? Now the Tribal Sub-Committee in a way has been outmoded to this extent that lakhs and lakhs of States people have been integrated into provinces. Take the question of Orissa. When the Tribal Sub-Committee went to Orissa it had to deal only with those areas that were excluded or partially excluded. The present position is that about 24 States have been integrated into Orissa and several others into the Central Provinces. Most of these States are overwhelmingly populated by Adibasis. What happens in regard to them? Whatever scheduled areas the Sub-Committee has recommended is really insignificant. It does not cover the whole Adibasis population, particularly of the two provinces of the Central Provinces and Orissa.

I would like Dr. Ambedkar, therefore, to tell me quite clearly that whatever provisions, whatever little concessions that he desires this Constitution should have, will apply also to those areas that are not particularly specified within the scheduled areas.

Then I come to article 13 (1) (b), namely, to "assemble peaceably and without arms". I have to point out

that this matter of the Arms Act has been very mischievously applied against the Adibasis. Certain political parties have gone to extremes to point out that because Adibasis carry bows and arrows, lathis or axes, which they do daily as a normal part of their life, which they have done for generations and generations. And when they are doing today they have done before, that they are preparing for trouble. Let me give you the instance of the Oraons. We have in this Assembly only one Oraon member. Now the Oraon group of Adibasis constitutes the fourth largest block of Adibasis in India. Just about now, they have what we call Jatras or Melas. These are annual occasions for their cultural activities. They have a certain ceremony in which the head of the Oraon village will carry the flag and the rest of them carry lathis with them and proceed into the various *akhadas* or villages. It is a festival for the people; they have done it in a harmless way for generations and generations and, now we have been told last year and the year before last that we should not carry weapons. I do not mind pointing out there are several Members here from Bihar who will never be able to get back to their homes unless they are escorted with people and with arms. In my own part, we live in the jungles and every one, even women, may I point out, carry what might be designated arms, but they are not arms in that sense. Whenever we have to hold meetings, if people come with their own usual things, I want to know whether it is going to be interpreted that we are assembling unpeaceably and carrying arms for an unlawful purpose. These are the only points, Sir, that I want to have clarified.

I will give one more instance. Every seven years, it is the custom in Chota Nagpur to have what they call. 'Era Sendra', 'Janishikar'. Every seven years, the women dress as men and hunt in the jungles--dressed

as men, mind you. That is the occasion when women showcase their hunting prowess. They arm themselves like men with bows and arrows, lathis, belas and so forth. Now, Sir, according to this particular article in the Constitution, the Government might interprete that women every seven years were getting together for a dangerous purpose. I urge the House to do nothing that is going to upset the simple folk. They have been among the most peaceful citizens in our country and we should be very cautious in doing anything which might be misunderstood by them and instigate trouble.

Sir, I have, as I have said, no difficulty in accepting this particular article, but I thought I should seek clarification from Dr. Ambedkar on these two particular points. (www.*parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol7p18a.htm)*

Constituent Assembly Debates On 2 December, 1948 Part 2

Dr. Ambedkar's Reply

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:

Now, Sir, my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh asked me certain questions about the Adibasis. I thought that was a question which could have been very properly raised when we were discussing the Fifth and the Sixth Schedules, but as he has raised them and as he has asked me particularly to give him some explanation of the difficulties that he had found, I am dealing with the matter at this stage. The House will realize the position we have laid down in the Draft Constitution with regard to the Adibasis. We have two categories of areas--scheduled areas and tribal areas. The tribal areas are areas which relate only to the province of Assam, while the Scheduled Areas are areas which are scattered in provinces other than Assam. They are really a different name for what we used in the Government of India Act as 'partially excluded areas'. There is nothing beyond that. Now the scheduled tribes live in both, that is, in the Scheduled Areas as well as in the tribal areas

and the difference between the position of the scheduled tribes in Scheduled Areas and scheduled tribes in tribal areas is this: In the case of the scheduled tribes in the Scheduled Areas, they are governed by the provisions contained in paragraph V of the Fifth Schedule. According to that Schedule, the ordinary law passed by Parliament or by the local Legislature applies automatically unless the Governor declares that law or part of that law shall not apply. In the case of the scheduled tribes in tribal areas, the position is a little different. There the law made by Parliament or the law made by the local legislature of Assam shall not apply unless the Governor extends that law to the tribal area. In the one case it applies unless excluded and in the other case, it does not apply unless extended. That is the position.

Now, coming to the question of the scheduled tribes and as to why I substituted the word "scheduled" for the word "aboriginal", the explanation is this. As I said, the word "scheduled tribe" has a fixed meaning, because it enumerates the tribes, as you will see in the two Schedules. Well, the word "Adibasi" is really a general term which has no specific legal de jure connotation, something like the Untouchables. It is a general term. Anybody may include anybody in the term 'untouchable'. It has no definite legal connotation. That is why in the Government of India Act of 1935, it was felt necessary to give the word 'untouchable' some legal connotation and the only way it was found feasible to do it was to enumerate the communities which indifferent parts and in different parts and in different areas were regarded by the local people as satisfying the test of untouchability. The same question may arise with regard to Adibasis. Who are the Adibasis? And the question will be relevant, because by this Constitution, we are conferring certain privileges, certain rights on these Adibasis. In order that, if the matter was taken to a court of law there should be a precise definition as to who are these Adibasis, it was decided to invent, so to say, another category or another term to be called 'Scheduled Tribes' and to enumerate the Adibasis under that head. Now I think my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh, if he were to take the several communities which are now generally described as Adibasis and compare the communities which are listed under the

head of scheduled tribes, he will find that there is hardly a case where a community which is generally recognised as Adibasis is not included in the Schedule. I think, here and there, a mistake might have occurred and a community which is not an Adibasi community may have been included. It may be that a community which is really an Adibasi community has not been included, but if there is a case where a community which has hitherto been treated as an Adibasi Community is not included in the list of scheduled tribes, we have added, as may be seen in the draft Constitution, an amendment whereby it will be permissible for the local government by notification to add any particular community to the list of scheduled tribes which have not been so far included. I think that ought to satisfy my friend, Mr. Jaipal Singh.

He asked me another question and it was this. Supposing a member of a scheduled tribe living in a scheduled area or a member of a scheduled tribe living in a tribal area migrates to another part of the territory of India, which is outside both the scheduled area and the tribal area, will he be able to claim from the local government, within whose jurisdiction he may be residing, the same privileges which he would be entitled to when he is residing within the scheduled area or within the tribal area? It is a difficult question for me to answer. If that matter is agitated in quarters where a decision on a matter like this would lie, we would certainly be able to give some answer to the question in the form of some clause in this Constitution. But, so far as the present Constitution stands, a member of a scheduled tribe going outside the scheduled area would certainly not be entitled to carry with him the privileges that he is entitled to when he is residing in a scheduled area or a tribal area. So far as I can see, it will be practically impossible to enforce the provisions that apply to tribal areas or scheduled areas, in areas other than those which are covered by them.

Sir, I hope I have met all the points that were raised by the various speakers when they spoke upon the amendments to this clause, and I believe that my explanation will give them satisfaction that all their points have been met. I hope that the

article as amended will be accepted by the House. (Mahto, 2013, pg 193)

There were many Members to take care of the general interest but very few to take care and speak for interest of the Adibasis. Whosoever were there in this camp, their voice was feeble, except that of Jaipal Singh, who cared little as to what the others thought of what he said, as long as he knew that what he stood for was in the interest of 'my people'. He had been eagerly waiting for the Report of the Commissioner of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and finally when the report came, he was just put off. In December 1952, Jaipal made the following speech in the Parliament on the 'Report on Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Commissioner, 1952'.

> "I regret I find it very difficult indeed to feel enthused over this report. Apart from thanking the Government for setting apart a meager day, one day only, to discuss this report, I have nothing more to say by way of congratulating the Government. The introductory speech of the venerable minister is proof in itself of the lack of seriousness of the gravity of this problem. There are empty Treasury Benches. Is that how the Treasury Benches receive this very important subject? I know there would be the reported materials that they will read and perhaps in their own time try to digest. But surely, those of us who are inarticulate most of the time in this House deserve a little more consideration from the Treasury Benches than we are getting… The Treasury Benches must have enmass to listen to the difficult voice of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the backward classes and others who might be interested in the problem of the depressed section of our community.
>
> I know it for a fact that there is no greater friend in this country today of the minorities and the group we are discussing today are a minority, but very important minority—some have been neglected for a century, others have been neglected always, for thousands of years. There is one person about whom I would like to say a few words. I am not at all concerned with what the Special Officer has written. But there is one

propaganda officer, a natural one, who has been saying things from his heart, whenever he has had opportunities of visiting tribal areas who deserves the thanks not of mine only, but of the many tribal millions and the depressed classes, and that is Jawaharlal Nehru. He is the only one who, as far as I can see it, in an India that is infested with obscurantists, is the champion of the minorities.

Having said that I do not want to throw any more bouquets, because I would like to get down to reality, get down to brass tasks and try to give my own suggestions. I know it has become the habit of the speakers in this country to screen themselves behind big names, Mahatma Gandhi's name has been mentioned, Dr. Ambedkar's name has been mentioned and the names of many others have been mentioned. Even the name of Indian National Congress has been dragged into picture. I can think of no poorer ways of presenting one's case than to shield behind big names. I am not here to defend my party or abuse other parties. All that I request this House and the country is to look at this problem above party politics, because if it is going to be treated as a matter of party politics—what the Congress men have done or not done—then...we shall be lost completely. For that very reason I urge my friends, whether they are with me politically or against me, to accept whatever I say in that particular light, in the light of this tremendous problem being kept above party politics. And it is because of that I have to criticize the various Governments of the States about whether, in my opinion, they have failed to achieve...Unfortunately, it is because everything is handled from a political angle that we have failed in this... We have failed to achieve what we might have achieved even in these couple of years.

I know there will be speakers after me, particularly people wearing white caps, who will eulogize everything that has been done by their fellow white *capwallas*. Let us go to Bihar and see the areas where Adivasis suffer and also glorify ourselves. What is happening in Bihar? I have only mentioned that people screen themselves behind big names.

The name of Adimjati Seva Mandal has been mentioned in this connection. There are annual conferences held in Rastrapati Bhavan. Why? Are these people prepared to tell me here that the Mandal has any confidence in any of the places where it has been constituted? How is that in South Bihar, in Jharkhand, despite my Honourable Friend, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru—whom we worship, because he is the only hope of this country—despite his visit to that area the Congress faced holocaust…?

…I do not want our revered Leader to be exploited by unscrupulous people. I am advisedly using these rather strong words. I do not mean to abuse anybody. But what I want to say is this. There are people who call themselves social workers. There are some people who call themselves social workers and are exploiting the fair name of Indian National Congress and Government funds; and they are not doing the tremendous, noble party any good. I want my friends on the other side to realize and to appreciate the fact. We do not mind who does good—whether it is western missionaries, Ramakrishna Mission, Indian National Congress, or anybody. We will welcome everyone who will come to help us to grow bigger and better and become prosperous. How is it, can my friends on the other side tell us why is it that non-aboriginal in that Naga Hills are suspect? It is all very well for my friends to say that during the British regime non-aboriginals were not allowed to go to Naga Hills. Would Dr. Katju have visited the Naga Hills those days? If he had done so, perhaps he would have come back minus his head. I am not in anyway supporting the isolationsim of the British. But there were certain definite reasons. My friend, Dr. Katju, suggested that more people should go and mix there. God help if that is going to happen! If you are going to bring more *baniyas* and money lenders, Heaven help the Adivasis in that jungles! What we want are genuine workers. I agree with him. We do not want that lovely speeches should be made and nothing more happens. We want something definite and concrete…

The whole question is this. I think the Ministry of Home Affairs in this particular regard have completely forgotten what their duty is as enjoined by the constitution. They have completely forgotten it. I am not interested in how many Commissioners or Special Officers are appointed and how many reports are written. What I am interested in is how my people—I do not mean only the tribal people; I mean all the backward people—how they are being enabled to coming up to the general level. A report is not going to make them just come up. In fact the report is ignominiously lacking in any information. The Special Officer himself admits that nobody thinks anything of him. Even with the Prime Minister's letter people do not take notice of him. What do you expect? As Thakkar Bapa himself once wrote to me—I have read this letter in this House before and I dare not read it again—After all he is Government servant, and he has his limitations.

Let us forget the Special Officer. Whatever has happened or not happened is not his fault. But I do accuse the Ministry of Home Affairs for lacking in an integrated policy....

It has happened only yesterday. What did my friend the Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power say? Here the Prime Minister and the Planning Minister and everybody has assured us on the floor of this House and told us that the Adibasis evacuated from the places submerged by water as a result of the multipurpose river valley projects would get land for land, house for house. Now we are told, like a bolt from the blue, no. I can repeat the words. But they are so fresh. It happened only yesterday, and I do not think the House would like to be burdened with a repetition of that. A complete change. What is happening? We hear of a wonderful thing, the Hirakud Dam. Yes, the Hirakud Dam is an excellent thing. But is that all? Is a fine piece of engineering all that my honourable friends on the other side want to enthuse over, and make me completely forget what is going to happen to my people? Should not these people who are transplanted be rehabilitated elsewhere or enabled to live with any self-

respect? Is an engineering feat the only thing we should brag about in this country?

What happened at the time of land acquisition for the Chittaranjan Loco Works? The Santhals there were given cash. Within about three weeks they were landless labourers. Yesterday a question was asked about the Maithon project. I would urge upon my friends, it may be that they are not quite near the spot where all the tragedies happened. They do not quite appreciate the tragedy that is brought about. Do we want to increase the army of landless workers in this country? If we do not, then the Government should adopt a firm policy that no one should be made to evacuate village—Santhal or no Santhal—unless he is given land for land, house for house and more if possible…

All that I would urge on my friends opposite is this. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, a couple of years back, when a representation had been made by the father of this House, Mr. B. Das, after his tour of Assam wrote back saying that for some time he had been thinking of having a Ministry of Social Services. Perhaps my Honourable Friend would like me to remind him of it, in case he thinks I am just pulling something out of my hat. It is not that. This is what he said: 'Long time ago I was of opinion that we should have a Ministry of Social Service. But there is no point in having a minister unless there is something to be done.'

Well, quite frankly, I do not understand what the latter part meant. But the first art says that for a long time my leader there, our leader, the leader of this House has been thinking of establishing a Ministry of Social Service. But then he finds himself confronted with the terrible problem of the question of finance."(Batabyal, 2006, pg 485).

This speech of Jaipal Singh literally predicted the situation that was going to come due to development-induced displacement, particularly in the Adivasi regions where Pundit Nehru set out to set up his 'Temples of Modern India'. Jaipal could vividly visualize the frightening scene of homelessness of the poor landholders whose lands would be acquired for development projects. He could see

lakhs of people getting rendered homeless and landless, and joing the ranks of labourers losing every thing that they had, overnight. It is doubtful as to how many in the Parliament took the issue seriously though they very well knew that what Jaipal was talking about was true word to word. Development-induced displacement even today is a very big issue in India. Had the Government of the day paid attention to Jaipal Singh's advice of a stronger and human policy for development, displacement and rehabilitation, the present day inhumane situation of a large population due to massive displacement, would not have arrived. A generation has seen and experienced how the promises of good life due to development projects is simply hollow for the landowners, whose lands the Government wants for development projects. This is the reason why fresh land acquisition for new development projects has become very difficult for the Government. People no longer believe the Government's policies and promises. They do not want to part with their lands. Though the land may give just subsistence economy, all promise of good life in exchange of their farm lands, simply is seen with utmost doubt coming from past experience.

Jaipal Singh made yet another memorable speech on the occasion of placement of Damodar Valley Corporation Bill in the Constituent Assembly on February 14, 1948. He pointed out the problem of displacement inherent in development projects, emphasizing the need of a complete pro-poor and pro-people policy, keeping the displaced at the centre. Years later, what he said on the day in the Constituent Assembly came out in forefront in the frm of struggle of the poor farmers and the Adivasis against displacement in projects like Tehri, Narmada Valley etc.

> "...I congratulate my friend, Mr. Gadgil, for presenting this Bill. It augurs well for the Nehru Government that the first adventure in planning should affect the Adibasi tracts. It has taken Congressmen 65 years to do for the Adibasis something concrete, something big and something bold is being done; it is going to be model for future river projects throughout India.

...There is one thing on which I feel I must again make my emphasis and it is in regard to the promise which the Honourable Minister made for displaced persons and their resettlement. When he first begged leave to introduce this Bill, he promised the displaced people heaven. He said that he would give them houses better than they ever had and that every consideration would be paid to make their suffering as little as possible in the interim period. I would like to suggest to my Honourable friend the Minister that he might experiment with this promised heaven of his in a temporary way. For example, the villages will have to be evacuated. Obviously people must live somewhere. If this is an adventure in planning, surely we shall have some time to think, some time to experiment with our ideas on these displaced people. I know the area very well. I come from the area myself and let me tell the House that this Bill provided Free India an opportunity. This project is the first one of its kind to enable Free India to put right a damage on Adibasis that has been there for the last 6000 years. Most of the villages will be Santhal villages, but though they not entirely populated by the Santhals. Banias and other undesirable elements have got in and they have been for years a serious menace to the moral and material welfare of the people. Now banias also will evacuate, I ask the Honourable friend the Minister, is he going to reintstate the banias in the villages again, just because they are also evacuees from these villages, or is he going to take a bold step and see that this disease, this terrible virus that has crept into the simple body politic of these villages is completely uprooted and put at the bottom of the project? What is he going to do? Is he going to experiment? I am not trying to be inhuman: all that I am trying to say is this. Let us be realistic in our endeavour. It is no good saying that we are going to give them better houses. What is really important is: are you going to give back their self-respect? Are you going to give them a modus vivendi whereby they will be able to contribute as men of honour, compatriots as having a place of honour in the national life of India? This

is the issue. I am not looking at it merely from a material point of view. We are not going to make my fellow Santhals happier simply by making them live in palaces. We do not want palaces. We want to live for things whereby we can be compatriots in the common endeavour. I am thinking more of the spiritual aspect of the problem of rehabilitation, and this is not a matter with which we can play light-heartedly. We shall have to have the help of experts, of social workers, say from the Tata Social Institute at Bombay, or we may have to take the help of anthropologists, so that it will not be a merely a matter of lay experiment. When I talk of displaced persons, I am not merely thinking of the 300 odd who have temporarily been pushed backward. We have to think of the roughly five lakhs of Santhals who have been forced to make their habitats in the tea gardens of Assam. I think most of us are old enough to realize what Mahatma Gandhi tried to do in the tea gardens of Assam. I think most of us still remember that noble same Santhals, so that they might be repatriated back to their homes. I suggest while we are thinking of the displaced villagers and the inhabitants of those 300 and odd villages, we might as well bear in mind that perhaps we would be reintegrating the Santhals by making an endeavour, as far as is possible, to get back the persons, the families which have had to desert those villages in order to find living elsewhere, because this particular area is no longer going to be a desert. It is no longer going to be the subject to the ravages of a terrible and disruptive river. This project is going to make this river walk and not run: that is the whole idea of it. We are going to harness the water, which means that we shall have the water under control.

That brings me, as I said, to one rather particular aspect that is bound to be lost by people who are not Adivasis. When we think of submerging a village, we think merely of the submersion of lands and the houses. But we forget that there are things that an Adivasi values very much. For example, they have their Sarnas, the sal or other groves where most of the worship is done by them. They think very highly of

their burial called *Sasana*. In fact though he is now there, the march of his race, his ancestors from one part of the country to another part of the country is known by the menhirs, slabs of stones that they leave behind them. All these will have to be submerged. I want to ask my friend, the Minister, has he any idea of the spiritual rehabilitation of the men I have spoken of? Ofcourse we can not reproduce the groves but we are going to destroy their worshipping places. In the scheme of resettlement that we have, you any plan in detail that these people are going to have their worshipping place again? Or is it merely that we are going to give them big cement houses and say that they are better off than in their kutcha ones? That is the spiritual aspect that should not be forgotten.

Similarly there is the question of *akharas*. Every Santhal village has a plot, an arena, in the heart of it for their dancing. Dance is rhythm of life of the Santhals. Most of you may be inclided to laugh at the aboriginal dances…

But believe me there is much that the rest of India has to learn from Adivasis in regard to the rhythm of life. It was Tagore who chose a typical Santhal area to interprete to the world the rhythm of Indian life such as is found in all its nakedness at Bolpur and the other villages surrounding it. I would ask my Honourable friend the Minister not to forget that aspect of it either.

I would like to say something in regard to what my Honourable friend Hriday Nath Kunzru said. He seems to be under the impression that there will be such a surplus of energy that some machinery would have to be improvised which would compel and increase the consumption of electrical energy. So far as I have been able to understand the situation we shall not have a surplus of energy. The scheme is such that it is in the heart of the industrial country. It is not very far removed from the big industrial areas. It is surely intended that the energy, as much of it as we can produce, will be utilized by all the industrial concerns as well as by the population. So far as I can see there will not be much surplus energy. In any

case the whole purpose of the project would be defeated if there is not made full use of the energy. It is surely hoped new industries would be attracted by the project. So I think on that account the fears expressed by my friend Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru are unfounded. His reference to which was also supported by Professor Shah to my mind is equally ungrounded. Admittedly we have not as much coal as we would like to have. The Mahindra Committee Report shows that if we were to exploit our coal deposits a little more scientifically we can still carry on for about a century but this project will mean that coal that is now being used for industry will be available for other purposes. In other words, the consumption will not be as much as had been in the past because, coal, it is hoped, will be replaced by the electrical energy which should be available in abundance and at a much cheaper rate.

In the speech that I have heard T.V.A. [Tennesse Valley Authority—ed.] has been mentioned a good deal. I have been at pains to try to understand the underlying principles behind the T.V.A. and I find that there is much we have to learn from the T.V.A. But all the while we must remember that we have in the last resort to deal with human beings. The T.V.A. had to deal with America. Damodar Valley project has to deal with Indians and that is exactly where the differences come in. I know my friend Mr. Gadgil has taken the very best advice possible. After all what more can any Government do than to get Mr. Voorduin and Mr. Savage who are experts and who have had long experience of Tennesse Valley Authority that is in the technical aspect of it and the construction of the dam itself. I don't think there can be much doubt that the very best has been done to ensure the finest expert knowledge is being utilized for this and other projects. I understand that Mr. Savage has made a survey of the Hirakud project also. But when it comes to dealing with human beings his project has to deal with Indians and I think that is where the difference comes in. A suspicion has been generated that unless the personnel were very carefully selected they would

abuse their power. It has also been hinted that there might be friction between two provincial governments and various other local authorities that are situated in the area of operation and so forth. My own attitude to this is: Certainly have the very best men possible running this Authority, I am one of the co-signatories to the minute of dissent in which my friend Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad and I have made it quite clear that we would like the Authority to be unhampered, unfettered and unmanacled by interference from a bureaucracy about 700 miles away. We do want the things to work smoothly and the whole essence of democracy is that we do not lose faith in our fellow human beings. We say let the good in man outweigh the evil in him. When we come to discuss the clauses my friend Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad and I will have our own arguments to place before the Assembly but for the time being Sir I notice it is nearly time to adjourn and if I may just say so I think we must trust this Authority. Of course the very best men must be appointed and they must not be political appointments. There is no doubt whatever that the biggest project, the first colossal project that Free India is going to undertake must be run on such lines that it will be a complete success so that all other projects, be it Hirakud, Bhakra, Tungabhadra and what not, will look to this as a model and guide." (Batabyal, 2006, p.463)

While Jaipal understood the need of big projects for development and progress of Free India now detached from the shackles of the British, he could very well see the possible pitfalls. He was reluctant to be carried away by big promises of ministers, for his Adivasi people. He took such promises with a pinch of salt and did not hesitate to remind the government that it was to deal with 'human beings', who have culture, history, religious and spiritual practices—and not just deal with machines and funds. Half a century later, what Jaipal had feared about possible fall-outs of development projects, have actually become true. Today there are more pains due to development projects than joy, and fruit of it has been amassed by only a small section of the society, leaving the vast majority who till then were happy with their life, cheated and

unhappy. The worst thing is that despite failures of development projects on account of addressing majority happiness, there is no real introspection and governments want to blindly do what their predecessors did to the people decades back. As a result there is alienation of a section of the society—particularly the Adivasis and the other poor farmers, who think that development projects are not for them, and meant against them.

Jaipal was out-spoken. His fearlessness in putting across his thoughts taking sides of the most disadvantaged and downtrodden, is what stands out in all that he spoke at the Constituent Assembly. Usually in such places there are numerous to advocate the interests of the rich and the powerful, but too few to stand by the poor and the downtrodden. Jaipal was among the few such, and for this he did not expect any thanks from people he stood by. 'Do what pleases you, but do not expect gratitude'—this wise words of his mother reminded him every time he chose to stand by the poor, who will never ever know that he stood for him, beside him. In Later years, his own people by whom he stood, will get carried away by opinions that were unscrupulously formed by some men with the sole aim to defame Jaipal and demonise him, a practice that history has seen through ages whenever somebody became big and tried to fight for the rights, lawful historicity and reputation of his aboriginal community. The best way to kill a hero is to make him a villain through the art of story telling. There are many writers and story tellers who have followed this practice for Jaipal Singh.

A few months later, Jaipal was asked to speak in a debate on the national flag. It was Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru who had moved the resolution proposing that the national flag should be a "horizontal tricolour of saffron, white and dark green in equal proportion", with a wheel in navy blue in the centre.

On behalf of his people, Jaipal said he had "great pleasure in acknowledging this Flag as the Flag of our country in future". "But then", he continued, "Sir, most of the members of this House are inclined to think that the flag hoisting is the privilege of the Aryan civilized. Sir, the Adibasis had been the first to hoist flags and fight for their flags. ...Each village has its own flag and that

flag cannot be copied by any other tribe. If any one dared challenge that flag, Sir, I can assure you that particular tribe would shed its last drop of blood in defending the honour of that flag. Hereafter, there will be two Flags, one Flag which has been here for the past six thousand years, and the other will be this National Flag…This National Flag will give a new message to the Adibasis of India that their struggle for freedom for the last six thousand years is at last over, that they will now be as free as any other in this country."

Jaipal's knowledge of adivasi tradition, despite his foreign education, was elaborate. This debate on the national flag is one such proof to this.

Not only that each tribe had a flag of its own, but even in the same tribe, each *killi* had a flag of its own with animal, bird, tortoise, plants, fruits, climber etc as the emblem. This *killi* decided the kinship in the tribes and they united under a flag that was characterized by an emblem. On the flag was embedded the picture of the *killi*, and this flag could not used by any other group. Whenever one group set out on a battle against another, people of the kinship used to be united under the flag bearing their *killi*. This practice of kin getting united under a particular flag can be notised even today in the tribal community during social functions like *parha jatra*.

—Jaipal Singh

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5
The Second Jallianwala Bagh

'This was the second Jalianwala Bagh. The Jalianwala Bagh firing is marked as an important chapter in the Independence Movement of India where the police firing was presided over by a foreign government and a foreign General Dyer. Independent India's Orissa Government, which belonged to our own country, had ordered firing on the people of the land. Nothing could be more shameful and unfortunate than this.

—Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia

"Survivers, who were still children then, but now old, say they never saw the dead bodies of the victims. There was a huge well at the site which had been leveled by morning. It is feared that the police after killing the people had thrown them into the well and filled it up over night."

—Ran Vijay Nath Shahdeo
(90), Jharkhand Party

After the Independence of the country, there started a campaign to merge different principalities with India under the magnetic leadership of first Home Minister Sardar Ballabh Bhai Patel. Two states in Singbhum—Seraikela and Kharsawan became the centre of deep problem. While the people of the two states belonged predominantly to Jharkhandi culture, the rulers spoke Oriya. The rulers proposed to merge their states with Orissa, in complete disregard of the sentiments of the people. Without bothering to take the opinion of the people, the Government of India too, accepted the proposal of the rulers to merge the states with Orissa. A Chakradharpur Oriya-speaking resident Vijay

Kumar Pani was an influential Oriya leader, who had crafted this plan. He also had planned to merge Chakradharpur with Orissa. But the state had no ruler as the king Narpat Singh had died without leaving an heir. Saraikela and Kharsawan paid their allegiance to the ruler of Sambalpur, which had already been made under Orissa, and hence the two rulers had proposed so. But this decision of Government of India sent shockwaves among the Jharkhandi people. When the entire country was celebrating the Independence of the country, Jharkhandi people were fighting another battle—to save their identity. They realized that if all the principalities with Jharkhandi cultural identify got divided among different States, Jharkhand would be completely lost from history. Even the then Congress government at the Centre and the Provinces had similar ill-intentions and did little to care about the voice of the Jharkhandi population. Jaipal could see the horrible future that was going come upon the Jharkhandi population, and started giving voice to their hopes, aspirations and willingness for a separate identity.

January 1, 1948. Adivasi Mahasabha organized a huge gathering at Kharsawa against the move of Orissa. Thousands of men and women with bows and arrows, carrying food grains on their back and utensils to cook food, marching several miles from across places like Chakradharpur, Saraikela, Kharsawan and Jamshedpur, gathered at Kharsawan weekly *haat maidan*. When a rally was coming back after handing over a memorandum to the representative of Orissa government, the Orissa police fired upon them with machine guns. No less than one thousand people—both adivasis and non-adivasi original sadan people, were butchered mercilessly. The act of cowardice was carried out in order to crush the Jharkhand Movement which had gathered momentum.

The cruel police firing cast a shadow of pain and sorrow in the entire region. Ten days later on January 11, Adibasi Mahasabha held a huge gathering at Chaibasa to remember the martyrs and to resolve for a more intense movement. Jaipal Singh, who had been busy taking detailed reports of the ghastly act of Orissa government during the last ten days, addressed the huge gathering:

Brothers and Sisters:

I am indeed grateful for you all for coming to this meeting at a short notice from distant corners of Jharkhand like Palamau, Gangpur, Santal Parganas and Hazaribagh. We have met here today for two main reasons: 1) to show our sorrow for the nearly 1,000 Adivasis who were killed at Kharsawa on January 1st at the instance of the Orisaa authorities; and 2) To declare to the world our firm determination to resist all attempts at the administrative disintegration of Chota Nagpur Plateau. Within a few yards of this place, hundreds of Adivasis, wounded on New Year's Day at Kharsawan are lying about in the hospitals; the total number of injured people is well over 1,000. There are present in this meeting people who were eye-witnesses of the tragedy at Kharsawan, but, I take this opportunity to tell you all something I know of what happened.

On January 1st, a general meeting of the people of Kharsawan was arranged to be held at the market-place at Kharsawan, and, it happened to be a market-day also. Permissions for the meetings had been obtained and no objection whatever was raised by the newly installed Orissa authorities in Kharsawan State. Thousands of Adivasis went to the meeting from distant places like Jamshedpur, Mayurbhanj, Chaibasa and Raj Gangpur. Everything was orderly. There was a procession through the main through fare in the morning. After the procession, a number of Adivasi leaders went to see the Raja at his Palace. He received them willingly and explained to them that he had acceded to the Indian Union and had requested the Government of India to take over the administration of the State, as an interim arrangement pending final settlement. The leaders came away from the Palace and a public meeting was held at the market place from 2 pm to 4 pm. The Adivasi leaders, before going to their respective halting places, asked the people, who numbered about 35,000, to disperse and get back to their homes.

About half an hour later, began the terrible firing and it went on for over thirty minutes. As Adivasis were going back to

their homes, the Orissa Government soldiers confronted them with showers of bullets from Bren guns. People, who were in knowing, lay flat on the ground to avoid being mowed down by the battery of indiscriminate and ruthless firing. Firing, insensate, pre-mediated and merciless continued even when the people fled. Men, women and children were shot in their backs. Even horses, goats and cows in the market-place were among the victims of the bloody savagery.

Soon after the firing, the whole market-place, which had become littered with dead bodies and wounded persons, was cordoned off by Oriya soldiers, who did not allow anyone to escape from the cordon, nor did they allow anyone to come into from outside to attend to the injured. Orissa authorities had committed a foul crime, the foulest in the history of Free India, another Jallianwallabagh. How could the Orissa authorities hide their crime from the world? At dusk, they began systematically to destroy evidence of the ferocity of their Massacre of Innocents. They collected the dead bodies and carried them away in about 10 lorry-loads and disposed off the corpses at different places; some in the inaccessible and tiger-infected parts of the jungle, some in the deep streams and ravines, in the trenches dug over-night to bury them enmass and by burning them. The business of destroying dead bodies was so thorough that houses were searched for them. No wounded women were allowed to survive and many men were also hacked to death. Only about two scores dead were left behind. Men, women and children were ruthlessly massacred. Oriya cruelty knew no bounds. The wounded were left in the open throughout the wintry night and even cries of water were unheeded. I could give you details of their vandalism, as for example, their taking away gold and other ornaments from the persons of women. Just imagine their snatching away ornaments from dead bodies. It is better I should not go into further details.

However much the Orissa authorities tried to dissemble facts from the outside world, they have failed to black-out everything. Ever since the tragedy, people—most of them

eye-witnesses of the tragedy—have poured in to see to tell me things as they saw them. I have been at pains to find out everything but it has not been easy. The Orissa authorities did not want that anybody should see things for himself. They even used force to prevent stories from going outside. The Government of Bihar sent a Medical Mission, a Mission of Mercy, but it was turned away. It was not allowed because the Orissa authorities did not want that anyone should know anything which might incriminate them sill further.

I have told you I have seen scores of Adivasis and others in connection with the Kharsawan firing. Everyone I have met has been horrified. I have no doubt whatever in my mind that the firing was premediated and planned in advance, that the people were peaceful and orderly and in good humour, that the firing was deliberate, unbridled, ruthless but wholly unnecessary and unjustified, and, all that has been done by the Orissa authorities since the firing goes to show that they were obviously in the wrong that they were not honest or courageous enough to face the world for what they had done in cold blood. Well over one thousand people were wounded and not all of them were Adivasis. I understand that some Sikhs, who had gone there from Jamshedpur out of sympathy for us, are also among the injured. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have been ministering the wounded, particularly the doctors and nurses of the Tata Hospital at Jamshedpur and at the Chaibasa Hospital. I know much more could have been done to give relief to the sufferings of the wounded, had first-aiders and ambulance workers been given facilities by the Orissa authorities. I have already told you the Orissa authorities were determined to prevent help going to the sufferers.

I have tried to give you a succinct, unembroidered and simple picture of the Kharsawan massacre. I have deliberately been graphic. I, as a proud citizen of Free India, am ashamed to think that people, who could commit such crimes, are citizens of the Union of India. Since August 15th, we have all been dreaming dreams of democracy, where the voice of the

people would avail, where nothing would be done against the wishes of the people.

Seraikela and Kharsawan are the heart of Singbhum district. They are not contiguous to Orissa. They are also, historically, geographically, linguistically, ethnically and administratively of Chota Nagpur. Only a few years ago, they went under Orissa State Agency. With the merger of the State to the Provincial Administration, it was natural to expect Saraikela and Kharsawan would get back their historical status-quo, that they would return to the Chota Nagpur Administration.

When the Cuttack conference took place to decide the provicipal disposition of the merging States, the leaders of the greater Orissa Party took good care to deceive the States Ministry. "Orissa States Agency" was good enough for the Greater Orissa leaders to bluff with. I do not know whether the rulers of Chota Nagpur States opened their mouths at the Cuttack Conference. I can say this much that the Government of Bihar signally failed in its duty by not representing the indisputable claim of the Province of Bihar to the ten Chota Nagpur States, namely, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Korea, Changbhakar, Bonai, Bamra, Gangpur, Seraikela and Kharsawan. All these ten States were, not many years ago, under the Chota Nagpur Administration. I leave it to the Government of Bihar to answer why it was so oblivious of its claim to the ten Chota Nagpur States. Why the Government of Bihar has been so inert in permitting Orissa soldiery to take occupation of Seraikela and Kharsawan. The Greater Orissa leaders must have known they have no claim to the Chota Nagpur States. The default of the Government of Bihar did not justify the Orissa Government in accepting to administer at least Seraikela and Kharsawan, even as an interim arrangement. What right had Orissa to have administrative pockets, Ulsters, in the Province of Bihar? Like thieves, Oriya Administrators and soldiers passed through Kolhan by dead of night and sneaked into Seraikela and Kharsawan. They knew they were acting contrary to the wishes of the people of Seraikela and Kharsawan, hence the need for an army

of occupation. Now their hands are smeared with blood of Jharkhandis and they cannot escape universal condemnation. Jharkhandis have from times immemorial been a hospitable people. In Jharkhand you find people living and working from all parts of India. The Kharsawan massacre has been an abuse to our hospitality and friendliness. Now every Jharkhandi has become hostile to every Oriya. We have tried to control our people, to ask Adibasis to take the Kharsawan butchery calmly, but I find that the attitude of the Oriya leaders is still defiant and imperialistic. My advice is that Orissa authorities should quit at least Seraikela and Kharsawan immediately and either the Government of Bihar should step in there or neutral administrators be appointed by the Government of India. Wherever there is a dispute, neutral administrators should be appointed. It is not fair that in all the ten Chota Nagpur States, either Orissa or Central provices servants should be appointed. It will only complicate things and lead to further disaster. I appeal to the Government of India to withdraw Orissa Administration from the Chota Nagpur States, and during the interim period, put in their stead neutral administrators.

I want to tell you plainly that all Rulers of Chota Nagpur States want to come back to Chota Nagpur. I say "to come back". They were with us before and they belong to us. We will not allow them to go outside of Chota Nagpur. Geographically, they belong to Chota Nagpur; people of these States are not Oriya speaking, and the subjects have also expressed, in no uncertain terms, their determination to get back to Chota Nagpur. A plebiscite will corroborate what I say. I know that Greater Orissa leaders have lost no time to make full use of their present opportunity to victimize the Rulers of the Chota Nagpur States, and, I want to warn them that the People of Jharkhand and Bihar Proper will not rest till the invader has been driven out of the Chota Nagpur States.

Before I go to talk of general Jharkhand problems, let us stand up in silence for a few minutes in honour of the nearly 1,000 men, women and children, who have lost their lives for

the sake of the Life and Liberty of Jharkhand, and, I would ask you also to remember their dependants and the wounded, numbering well over 1,000. We salute the dead. They have made their supreme sacrifice. They have shown us the way.

They shall not grow old,
As we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn;
At the going down of the sun,
And early in the morning,
We shall remember them.
(Two minutes silence)

Many Adibasi homes have been affected by the Kharsawan massacre. We have decided to start a Kharsawan Relief Fund and Mr. Misri Lal Jain of Chaibasa has agreed to be the Treasurer of the Fund, with Mr. Hari Charan Soy of Kharsawan as its Secretary, and myself as its Chairman. I appeal to you all to show your sympathy concretely. Give what you can but give if quickly. Every amount, however big or small, will be of help.

The Orissa atrocities have shocked everyone. All political parties have made common cause and are determined to show a united front against Orissa aggression. We shall not allow an inch of Chota Nagpur to go elsewhere. We shall fight to the last man to preserve the integrity of Chota Nagpur Plataeu. I would have thought that the Oriyas had gauged the temper of the people of Singbhum district during the last Boundary Commission. I want to tell them bluntly that they are again playing with fire. The Kharsawan tragedy is deeply resented by the people of Bihar Proper and Jharkhand, and a new bitterness, a new fury, a new hatred, has been born against Orissa in general. Open hostilities might break out in ugly form, and, it is now for Orissa leaders to oblviate by withdrawing immediately from the Chota Nagpur States and asking the Government of India to appoint others, either Government of Bihar or neutral administrators of these States, pending final settlement. Whatever happens, our struggle for the Life and liberty of Jharkhand must continue. For the first time in

the history of the Jharkhand Movement, the entire people of the Province of Bihar and the ten Chota Nagpur States are united and bound together to get back the Chota Nagpur States. We mean to act constitutionally, to cooperate with the Government of India in getting our just deal. We shall not play the role of territory grabbers; we want and must have what is our won. So I present before you resolutions for your general approval. They read:

1. The people of Bihar Proper and Jharkhand condemn the Orissa Government atrocities at Raj Kharsawan on January 1st, 1948, and request the Government of India to remove the Orissa Administrators immediately from the States, namely, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Korea, Changbhakar, Bonai, Gangpur, Bamra, Seraikela and Kharsawan either under the Government of Bihar or appoint neutral administrators during the interim period.

Do your pass this resolution? - Vote - Unanimously agreed.

2. This meeting, which is representative of all political parties and all sections of the people of Bihar Proper and Jharkhand, requests the Government of India to commit the ten Chota Nagpur States, namely, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Korea, Changbhakar, Bonai, Gangpur, Bamra, Seraikela and Kharsawan, which were, not many years ago, under the Chota Nagpur Administration, and, historically, geographically, linguistically, ethnically and administratively belong to Chota Nagpur, back to the Province of Bihar on their being merged into the Provincial Administration.

Do your pass this resolution? - Vote - Unanimously agreed.

I shall send these resolutions to the Government of India. Now we must appoint an authority to negotiate with the Government of India in connection with the merger of the ten Chota Nagpur States. Several leaders including those of the States and the Rulers themselves have suggested that I should be entrusted with the task of carrying on negotiations with the Government of India along with representatives whom it might be desirable to have with me. I would, for example, find it necessary to have some of the Rulers themselves. Is it your wish that I should have charge of this work? You must now formally authorize me to negotiate on your behalf.

Do your pass this resolution? – Vote - Unanimously agreed

I thank you for the honour of entrusting me and my colleagues with the task of carrying on negotiations with the Government of India for the merger of the ten Chota Nagpur States to Chota Nagpur, that is, to the Bihar Administration.

You will notice that so far I have said nothing about Mayurbhanj and its 9,90,977 people, of whom 7,14,954 are Adibasis. The Greater Orissa leaders had tried their damnedest to force His Highness the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj to join the Orissa Administration. He deserves our congratulations for having defeated and overcome Orissa designs. He has not joined Orissa Administration. He is naturally with us, and I want to assure him, on your behalf, that he will receive every help to prevent Orissa Agression.

May I take this opportunity to tell you something about the Constituent Assembly work. You are interested in the report of the Tribal Sub-Committee which visited Chota Nagpur last year. The report is ready and will be presented to the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly very soon, and, then, final recommendations will be thrashed out in the Constituent Assembly itself, and the accepted recommendations will find place in the new Constitution. Things may not moving fast enough for you. I would urge you to be patient. A little delay does not harm us; on the contrary it affords time to India leaders at large to know more of the Adibasi problems and of the Jharkhand situation. One thing I can tell you definitely and with full confidence, and it is, that every witness who appeared before the Tribal Sub-Committee was emphatic that the administrative integrity of the Chota Nagpur Division and the Santal Parganas should continue. This is significant.

What about the Jharkhand Province? This question also will come up before the Constituent Assembly in due course. There are several claims for new Provinces, namely, for Andhra, Kerala, Karnataka, maharastra, Mahakoshal, Delhi, Mithila and our own. The Hono'ble Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, has already made a statement in the Constituent Assembly in due course that a Commission or several Commissions will be appointed by his Government in due course to examine the

question of linguistic and cultural provinces. Our demand will be considered along with the demand of other areas. Be patient. You are making a big demand and big things take time. Meanwhile, carry on the struggle for the Life and Liberty of Jharkhand. Make sure that you win every election on the Jharkhand issue.

Jai Adibasi! Jai Jharkhand! (Mahto, 2015, p. 656)

6
Typhoon

There is no folk in the whole world,
So helpless and so wise,
There is hunger in our bellies,
And laughter in our eyes.
They laugh at us and love us,
Both mugs and eyes are wet,
For they do not know us,
As we have not spoken yet.

The two-storey building located only a few hundred furlongs away from Raj Bhawan of Jharkhand, opposite Karamtoli Talab, stood something like a fatigued monument. A huge but rugged-looking gate, set up besides an array of shops, opened into a sprawling courtyard. A mammoth tree whose branches showed clear signs of age, stood in the middle of it. The premise gave a near desolate look. The knocks on the door were responded to, and a while later an old lady, a tired looking old lady, came out.

'What are you looking for?'

'Is it the house of Lal Saheb, an old associate of Jaipal Singh?

She did not say anything. She went back into the house, pulled out two plastic chairs and placed them under the aging tree.

'*Baithu* (Please sit down). I have informed him, he is coming'.

Within a few minutes, a very old gentleman dragged himself slowly through the door with the support of a walking stick and spread out his right hand, lifting it with his left.

'*Baithu*—please sit down,' he too said in chaste Nagpuri, the Lingua Franca of Chotanagpur, springing a natural cheer on his

face. The white beard on his face had not been shaven, probably for over a week, but his broad forehead, piercing dark blue and dense white hair, summed him up. In a minute or two, the lady turned up again, this time with a hearing-aid. The old gentleman took the equipment and set it up on to his ear.

'*Haa..Ekhan besh sunbathe*—yes, I can hear clearly now. Kahu—tell me'.

Lal Saheb, he was popularly known by this name in the region. The bunch of politicians who now lord over Jharkhand after it was formed, knew little of him, or for that matter people like him who once fought like tigers for their dream *dishum*—'country/state', are known very little by the present bunch of politicians. The premise indicated that visitors to this house were next to nil now. But Lal Saheb, as the world knew him—was the scion of Palkot Nagbanshi Royal family, one of the many Nagabanshi branches of rulers in Chotanagpur—instead of his actual name Lal Ranvijay Nath Shahdeo. His physique wore a tired look, but not his eyes.

'Jaipal *dada* never crossed this spot. He would not go inside my house. He would say that elder brothers do not enter the house of the younger brothers when the *bahus*—sister in-laws, are inside. In relation, the Mundas are the elder brothers of the Shahdeos and this was the social practice. And, though Jaipal was educated in England, he kept all the social norms of the Munda community,' Lal Saheb gave a hearty laughter and said. 'You see this old tree—its branches are drying up. It is under this tree that he would sit surrounded by all his close associates. We used to discuss important issues and form strategies for the movement right here. This tree has seen them all,' he gave another of his characteristic loud laughter.

Lal Saheb probably was on the other side of 90, but he clearly remembered how, as a small boy, he had jumped into Jharkhand Movement after listening to Jaipal Singh speak at some public meeting that infused spirit in the people. He was an encyclopaedia of sort on Jaipal Singh's life and work, and his every word created vivid pictures in mind.

Jaipal's popularity in Chotanagpur that spread beyond present-day Jharkhand into some princely states of Orissa and

Chhattisgarh, had soared soon after he came back home from England and took the reigns of Adibasi Mahasabha. From 1939, the year he began his journey as the main architect of Jharkhand upto 1949, into Free India as a Member of the Constituent Assembly, Jaipal had mostly rallied behind Adivasi problems, the moral, spiritual, material, social and economic uplift of the aborigines. But he had started realizing that the non-Adivasi population too had to be linked with the movement, for leaving them out will make the bigger goal remain distant.

Jaipal Singh had been looking for a way as to how to bring in the non-Adivasi original inhabitants of the region. He discussed with his fellow colleagues in Adibasi Mahasabha on the idea of forming a political party that could bring both the Adivasis and the Non-Adivasi *sadans* under one fold. His idea was agreed upon by all and thus began the formation of a political party. *Lal Saheb* recalled how Justin Richard Hembrom—popularly known as Justin Richard, a Ho leader from Singbhum had played a crucial role in the formation of the political party.

On December 31, 1949 and January 1, 1950, the Adivasi Mahasabha held a mammoth gathering at Karandih Maidan in Jamshedpur. Thousands of Adivasis and Sadans, apart from the leaders of Adibasi Mahasabha, joined the meeting. After two days of serious debates and discussions, it was decided that Adibasi Mahasabha should be converted into a political party and it would be named 'Jharkhand Party'. The Jharkhand Party came into existence on the end of the second day's convention and Jaipal was given the reigns of the new party. From *Chotanagpur*, the focus shifted to *Jharkhand*. Antiquity of the word *Jharkhand* had been obvious and ever uniting, and this word was invoked for the next chapter of the movement—a separate State for the people living in the region. Jaipal in his presidential address said: 'Today, with the formation of a new political party, we have opened the doors for Non-Adivasi sadans for the movement. Jharkhand Party belongs to all the Adivasis and the Non-Adivasi sadans living in the territory of Jharkhand."

After Jharkhand Party came into existence, the goal of a separate State for the people of Jharkhand became distinct and

clear. What was so far only in the mind of Jaipal had now become a common idea to everyone else too, and infused life and spirit in the masses that continued until the turn of the Millennium. Prior to the idea of Jharkhand as a separate State, many revolts and uprisings had taken place, like, Chuar Uprising, Kol Uprising, Santhal Uprising, Pahadiya Revolt, Birsa Munda's Revolt etc, but, it was left to Jaipal to ideate Jharkhand as a separate State and give a political expression of a common territory for tribal and the non-tribal groups residing in this region for ages. In a way, Jharkhand was born on January 1, 1950; and the night of November 14, 2000 was only the date of its formal birth.

Jaipal had been blessed with the acumen of strong imagination. He could perceive things in a rare manner and sense what was going to come. As a child, Jaipal had seen how roosters played an important role in the social and religious life of the tribal community. Poultry keeping is a natural practice in the tribal and non-tribal communities across Jharkhand. The owner of the household constructs a small room in the corner of his courtyard where the chickens are raised. In some houses, the chickens are accommodated in the house itself; they are given space in a corner of the house. Some males, who have the acumen of leadership and the spirit of a fighter, are specially groomed by the owner to perform intelligent functions. They crow in the stillness of the night and assure the members of the house that everything is alright. This is the first crow of the rooster and the member can avail an hour's more sleep. After about an hour, the rooster gives another call—this time a wake up call. The member of the house has to get ready to rise. The third and the final call that the rooster gives is at the crack of the dawn, asking his master to jump off the bed immediately and start the day. If this call is compared with the clock, it comes at around four in the morning. Not one, but all other roosters of the village start calling each other too, and the village gets filled with a music so strange and beautiful. Often this spree continues for a quarter of an hour in which roosters vie against each other. The female chickens and the younger ones have the right to keep sleeping, but not the grown up cocks. Even the ones growing up who want to receive training to play such

socio-cultural roles, have to wake up and join their elders and learn how to crow. It is difficult to guess what makes the rooster know time. But folk wisdom reveals that the rooster feels the change in the wind flow in the darkness of the night and senses the correct timing to crow.

The masters can no longer stay in bed after the third call of the rooster. As most masters are farmers, they prepare to go to the field. The call of the rooster is a waking up call even for the oxens who have to go to the fields along with their masters. The women folk of the households too,rise to get started with their culinary activities.

With a rare insight, Jaipal chose the Rooster as the symbol of the new political party.

Jaipal knew that the rooster can instantly connect with the people of Jharkhand: wake them, make them rise and go.

Jaipal developed a political philosophy around the rooster—a philosophy which was so indigenous yet so clear to the people poor and rich, educated and uneducated, children and the old that they instantly associated themselves with it. He decided to go to the people with this very symbol and awake them and inspire them to claim their political rights.

'*Wo tufan bain gelak*: He became a typhoon,' notes Lal Saheb. Jaipal toured the length and breadth of Jharkhand of his dream and started uniting and educating them politically. The black ambassador he had been gifted by his friends ran on roads and non-roads alike. At many places, plyable roads were set up to facilitate Jaipal's car's movement. It is easier to run on a ready road—whether it is political, social, cultural or otherwise—but difficult to make road and walk on it. The first man, who makes the road, always faces the force of the wilderness: wildness of the nature, wild animals carnivorous and non-carnivorous, wildness of the weather and so forth. It is true for any kind of road—physical, social, cultural, political or even spiritual. People who come after him realize little as to how difficult it must have been to create a road amidst forests and hills, connecting and linking one *pagdandi* with another—which often are curvy, and prepare a single straight road that can take to a destination. Jaipal had to do exactly this.

One by one, he linked each one with the other, each village with the other, each group with the other. Even before India became Free and the Jharkhand Party came into existence, before India adopted the new Constitution on January 26 in the same year, he had toured to the princely states neighbouring Chhattisgarh States Agency and Orissa States Agency where aboriginal rulers ruled since ages. He wanted to unite them and their people to the cause of a separate state. Jaipal writes: 'In Madhya Pradesh there was little progress away from the adjacent district of Chhota Nagpur. The area was too large and most of the rulers, aborigines, assumed titles of different descent, from the sun, moon and so forth. Suryabansi, Chandrabansi, Rajbansi! In Gondwana, they declared themselves as Rajputs; only the Raja of Sarangarh was proud of his ancestry. His totem was the same as mine, a 'Turtle'; which adorned all his correspondence. He was a shikari and his annual bird shoot was enviable. His son, Naresh, had been my pupil. He is now an important political figure though he has not been able to marry off any of his six daughters. The Raja of Khairagarh, another pupil, was a striking personality. He was a good dancer. He went to Los Angeles and the film stars fell for him. He also is a figure to be reckoned with in Madhya Pradesh politics. His palace is now a University of music. His wife was a minister; now she is in the Lok Sabha and he has gone back to Bhopal as minister'.

In the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, now Uttar Pradesh, the Adivasi had changed to 'Adi-Hindus'. They too had become admirers of Jaipal Singh and he was invited there too, by the 'Adi-Hindus' to their first conference held in Lucknow. They made elaborate arrangements for the conference. They printed a small pamphlet, Adivasi Danka, "Tribal Drum," with Jaipal's photograph on the front page. 'I dared not try Urdu in Lucknow. My speech unfortunately, was in Oxford English', Jaipal recalled.

Meanwhile, under the banner of Jharkhand Party, Jaipal came up with a geographical area for his dream Jharkhand. The area included: Division of Chhotanagpur, the district of Santhal Parganas, the former Chhotanagpur States, viz., Changbhakar, Korea, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Gangpur, Bhagalpur district, Jamui sub-division of Monghyr district, Kawakol P.S., Govindpur

P.S., Rajauli P.S. and Sherghati P.S. of Gaya district, Rohtas P.S. and Adhaura P.S. in the district of Shahabad, Dudhi Tehsil and Hobertganj Tehsil of Mirjapur district. The conceived State of Jharkhand had a geographical area of about 63,859 square miles with a population of 1,63,67,177. This area had been known historically as 'Jharkhand' and the people here shared a common culture, social norms and historicity.

The bells for the first Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Free India had rung and Jharkhand Party went to polls representing the Adivasis and the Non-Adivasi sadan's problems and aspirations. Jaipal fielded his candidates in Bihar Assembly constituencies across his dream Jharkhand and tirelessly campaigned for them. Workers of Jharkhand Party—formerly Adibasi Mahasabha, would visit weekly haats with huge Nagaras (drums) and beat them to gather crowd in order to inform them of a day of Jaipal's meetings. Wherever he went, as recalled by old-timers, he went with his Rooster: a colourful one, seated alongside himself in his ambassador car; and spoke of his dreams to the people in public meetings. He spoke in the local language—Mundari or Nagpuri, as the situation required, and people got him instantly. Often he would begin from the scratch and slowly build up his speech, explaining to the gathering everything like a teacher. His experience as a teacher, first at Achimoto and then as the Principal at Rajkumar College, Raipur where he was the *guru* of the princes, aided him a lot in this task. His patience in teaching had already been tested, and speeches at these public gatherings were repetition of his educationist acumen. The Rooster often perched on his right shoulder when he addressed the people. It even crowed at an hourly interval and when it crowed, Jaipal stopped his speech. 'People of this village are very inhospitable. See, I have been speaking for the last one hour and nobody has even asked me for a glass of water!' Somebody from the crowd would run home and come back with two glasses: one with water and another with rice beer. People say he would drink from both the glasses and re-begin his speech. At the end of his speech, he asked questions to the people in order to test whether he had been

understood. Then, the gathering would pass a set of resolutions, and all present would repeat them before departing home.

Congress had an upper edge over all other political parties. But Jaipal's Jharkhand Party scripted history at the 1952 Bihar Assembly elections. It won 32 seats. In the Lok Sabha elections too, Jharkhand Party wrestled away four seats from the Congress. Jaipal himself won from Khunti Lok Sabha seat. In the Legislative Council of Bihar too, Jharkhand Party got a seat. After the Congress, Jharkhand Party emerged as the second largest party in Bihar Assembly and assumed the role of the Opposition.

After the historic win in the elections of 1952, Jaipal held a meeting of MLAs and the MPs of the Jharkhand Party in Ranchi. He addressed them thus:

> "Jharkhand is a region blessed with huge natural resources, at the same time with widespread poverty and backwardness. Forty per cent of the mineral resource of India is with us. Big capitalists and thekedars are growing fatter exploiting the resources of our area. Regional imbalance has assumed adangerous proportion. The state of Bihar gets its 80 per cent revenue from this region, but spends 10-15 per cent only, for the development of people and the region.
>
> Jharkhand region is a dwelling place of different tribes and non-tribes alike. We have a distinctive identity. Except the post Mughal era and during the British Raj, this region had been an Independent State with its own rulers. Our language, our Jhumar, Sarhul, Karam, Sohrai etc. make us a different people with a distinctive culture of our own. Our languages have been disdained, our culture has been suppressed, and we have been called uncivilized and *jungli*. In place of equality, we have been rendered to the fringe through exploitation. People of this region have played pioneering roles in the Freedom Movement, but we are being deprived of the benefits of Free India. The revolts of Tilka Majhi, the Great Kol Uprising, Sido-Kanhu's battle against the British and

Birsa Munda's movement are living examples of fight against imperialism. Apart throwing off the shackles of imperialism, the aspiration of these battles was to preserve the separate political and cultural identity."

Jaipal Singh reinforced his dream of separate Jharkhand in his legislators and his Parliamentarians with his short speech on this historic night. He told them that people of Jharkhand will now write their own destiny.

Jaipal's popularity had spread far and wide, and he remained engrossed in Jharkhand Party's activities. After he took over the reigns of Adibasi Mahasabha, he was in demand everywhere and had started neglecting his wife. He admits that his popularity 'went to my head' and 'I started neglecting Tara, my wife. She refused to come to Ranchi. Someone told her Ranchi was a jungle and full of ants! The biggest mental hospital in Asia was there! She believed I would surrender and give up the fight against Congress. I think Calcutta *memsahebs* also influenced her.'Jaipal's wife Tara, the granddaughter of Indian National Congress founder president Umesh Chandra Banerjee never came to Ranchi. Women often play crucial role in the lives of great men. Remaining behind the screen, they walk side by side with their husbands. But Jaipal remained very unlucky on this, right from the beginning of his political life. He had to fight battles both on the home front as well as on the frontier. Church of North India (CNI) provided him with a house, situated at present day Seramtoli Chowk in Ranchi, to live in. This place was barely a few furlongs away from another house which another great leader of Jharkhand Movement N.E. Horo had been, in similar manner, given to reside in by Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church. N.E. Horo probably was a member in Jaipal's Jharkhand party then. Years later; Horo would recall how Jaipal used to sometimes visit his residence and all his legislators and supporters used to huddle in a room at his house to discuss important issues. But most important discussions used to be held at the Seramtoli house of Jaipal, which had a huge premise. This house was visited by Prime Minister Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru when he came to Ranchi for a function. Preservation of historic places is least on the agenda of the Governments, particularly

when it comes to that of Jharkhand. Neither does the Church care for such things. Now, this historic house no longer exists. And in place of it stands tall the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), set up soon after Jaipal's dream of the state of Jharkhand came into existence on November 15, 2000.

Jaipal did not have an air of pride about his high education when he met ordinary men and women in meetings, haats and bazaars. Neither did he care much about sophisticated rich men and women. He treated them all equally. If someone knew only Mundari, he would converse with her in her language. If someone knew only Nagpuri, he conversed with him in Nagpuri. Ordinary folks, who have met him, testify to this ability of Jaipal. Jaipal loved pets and always kept a German Shepherd, who understood Mundari and Nagpuri, apart from English and Hindi.

Many opine that had Jaipal stayed single after his wife Tara 'refused' to come to Ranchi, the history of Jharkhand would have been different. But, destiny had its own future that men know only after it arrives, though fortune-tellers in India claim they can accurately predict. After remaining separated from Tara for 12 years, Jaipal decided to formally end this relationship. On May 7, 1952 he married Jaha Ara Jayratnam, daughter of Jayratnam, an ICS officer who was the first Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh in Free India. They tied the nuptial knot at Tees Hazari Court of Delhi. Amar Singh, the eldest son of Jaipal from first wife Tara, had a younger sister Sita Singh; while Birsa Birendra Jaipal Singh and Jayant Jaipal Singh—sons from Jaha Ara, have a sister too.

After the emphatic victory of Jharkhand Party, legislators of Jaipal kept up the heat of separate Statehood in Bihar Assembly. The mass support for the demand for a separate State of Jharkhand had reached its zenith. Everywhere, Jharkhand was the word that rested on the lips of the people. On March 3, 1953 President Rajendra Prasad, with whom Jaipal shared a complicated relationship due to the latter's indifference to Statehood and adivasi issues, arrived Ranchi on a visit. Apart from Jharkhand Party, Chhotanagpur Sanyukt Sangh, a forum of different social units which too were demanding Statehood for Jharkhand, under the leadership of Hazaribagh MP Ram Narayan Singh, called on the President.

Others in the team included Khudiram Mahto (a lawyer from Purulia and president of Chotanagpur Kurmi Panchyata), Prof. J.C. Haward (an Adibasi leader), Nageshwar Prasad (a freedom fighter), Ram Narayan Khalkho (president of Chhotanapur Samaj Sudhar Sabha), Gopal Das Munjal—a businessman-cum-journalist who was also the General Secretary of Jharkhand Party, later became a successful businessman), Lal Ambika Nath Shahdeo (lawyer), Lal Fanidra Nath Shahdeo, Kesharmal Agarwal (secretary of Marwari Sangh, Hazaribagh), Bisheshwar Prasad Gupta (editor of Weekly *Agnishikha* from Chaibasa), Pushkar Samant (president of Adibasi Students Fellowship, Ranchi), Jhaman Singh (Palamau), Devki Nandan Prasad (lawyer) and S.K. Roy (Principal of St Paul's School, Ranchi). These leaders handed over a memorandum to the President demanding: 1) Constitution of Chotanagpur-Santhal Pragana Vikas Board, 2) Five Cabinet Ministers and two Ministers of State from Chotanagpur-Santhal Pragana in Bihar Cabinet, 3) Setting up of a branch office of Bihar Public Service Commission in Ranchi with a Chairperson from Chotanagpur region, 4) Setting up of a University in Ranchi, and 4) Setting up of a bench of Patna High Court in Ranchi. Rajendra Prasad asked them to meet him at Raj Bhawan in Patna, but when the team went there to meet him, he is supposed to have flatly asked them to just co-operate with Bihar Ministry.

Apart from Jharkhand Party leaders, many Congress leaders in Chotanagpur-Santhal Pargana too, were demanding separate State of Jharkhand. But the Bihar Congress never allowed their sway. The Bihar Congress never gave any importance to the sentiments of Chotanagpur Congress leaders.

At the time of Independence, British India had 11 Provinces: Madras, Bombay, Bengal, United Province, Punjab, Bihar, Orissa, Central Province, Sindh, Assam and North West Frontier, each of which was directly under a Governor. Other territories, like North-West Frontier, Baluchistan, Delhi, Coorg, Ajmer, Andaman-Nicobar were under the Centre Government where the Representative of the Governor General ruled. After the partition the provinces and territories in Dominion of India remained as they were. But soon after Independence, demands for separate

States on linguistic and cultural lines picked up tempo. From October 1952, Andhra leader Sriramalu sat on an indefinite hunger strike demanding separate State of Andhra, and within a few days he died. The entire Andhra region of Madras Province erupted in violence in demand of a separate Andhra State. Prime Minister Pundit Nehru gave into the demands and carved out Andhra Pradesh from the erstwhile Madras Province. After Andhra became a separate State, such demands came as a flood from all other Provinces. Leaders and people of Jharkhand, who had been demanding for a separate State long before the Independence of India, thought that Pundit Nehru would act on the aspirations they had been cherishing since long.

On December 22, 1953 Prime Minister Pundit Nehru announced in the Parliament the constitution of a States Re-organisation Commission. Syed Fazal Ali was made the Chairman of the Commission with two other members in it—K.M. Pannikar and Hriday Nath Kunzru.

Meanwhile, Bihar Legislative Members from Jharkhand Party drafted a Memorandum for a separate State of Jharkhand. The Memorandum was given to the **States Re-organisation Commission on April 22, 1954.** The Memorandum stated:

> This memorandum is presented to the State Re-organisation Commission constituted by the Government of India, by the members of Jharkhand Party in the Bihar Legislature. The memorandum of submitted in connexion with the immediate connection, reconsideration and formation of Jharkhand within the national and constitutional frame-work of Sovereign democratic Republic of India, by the formation of the State of "Jharkhand" comprising the Division of Chhotanagpur, the District of Santhal Parganas, the former Chhotanagpur States, namely, Changbhakar, Jashpur, Korea, Surguja, Udaipur, bamra, Bonai, Gangpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and other adjacent territories which can suitably and conveniently be included into the new State. In view of the fact that Chhotanagpur and Santhal parganas and the adjacent territories form the compact and homogenous

block distinctly separated from Bihar by physical, historical and neutral features, this formation is claimed on administrative, economic and cultural grounds to strengthen the national solidarity and achieving more and definite internal and external unity and security of the Republic of India. It is claimed that the separation of Jharkhand is an economic and administrative necessity. The people of Jharkhand have a very strong desire for a clearer expression of their local individuality, differing from the plains as they largely do in origin, in history, in proclivities and in their land-tenure. History has amply shown to prove that Jharkhand will never develop until Jharkhand is dissociated from Bihar and created as a separate state.

The proposed state of Jharkhand would be enough in area, size and population to become a separate administrative state. It will have an area of about 63,859 square miles with a population of 1,63,67,177.

Jharkhand in respect of area and population is large enough to become a separate, compact, harmonious and administrative state. This memorandum is being submitted with a strong affirmation on moral, material and cultural grounds and for peace and good Government, that Jharkhand be reconsolidated and formed into a state comprising divisions of Chhotanagpur, the district of Santhal Parganas, the former Chhotanagpur States, viz., Changbhakar, Korea, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Gangpur, Bhagalpur district, Jamui sub-division of Monghyr district, Kawakol P.S., Govindpur P.S., Rajauli P.S. and Sherghati P.S. of Gaya district, Rohtas P.S. and Adhaura P.S. in the district of Shahabad, Dudhi Tehsil and Hobertganj Tehsil of Mirjapur district.

We the members of Jharkhand Party in Bihar Legislature hereby respectfully submit this memorandum to the State

Re-orgnisation Commission, this day on 22nd April, 1954.

Thank you,
Yours sincerely,

Sd/
Jaipal Singh
MP
President, Jharkhand Party.

1. Shri Sidiu Hembrom, MLA (Kolhan)
2. Shri Sushil Kumar Bage, MLA (Kolebira)
3. Shri Harman Lakra, MLA (Bero)
4. Shri Subnath Deogam, MLA (Manoharpur)
5. Shri Sukhdeo Majhi, MLA (Chakradharpur)
6. Shri Lukas Munda, MLA (Khunti)
7. Shri Jitu Kisku, MLA (Maheshpur)
8. Shri Junas Surin, MLA (Basia)
9. William Hembrom, MLA (Sikaripara)
10. Shri Kailash Prasad, MLA (Jugsalai+ Potka-1)
11. Shri Jethu Kisku, MLA (Rajmahal Damin)
12. Shri Supai Murmum MLA (Ramgarh)
13. Shri Satrughan Besra, MLA (Jamtara)
14. Shri Ramchandra Kisku, MLA (Pakur Damin)
15. Shri haripad Singh, MLA (Jugsalai + Potka-2)
16. Shri Babulal Tudu, MLA (Godda Damin)
17. Shri Devi Soren, MLA (Dumka)
18. Shri Jagnath Mahto Kurmi, MLA (Sonahatu)
19. Shri Paul Dayal, MLA (Ranchi)
20. Shri Madan Besra, MLA (Maslia)
21. Shri Ghaniram Santhal, MLA (Ghatshila + Bahrgora-2)
22. Shri Ujindra Lal Ho, MLA (Kharsawan)
23. Shri Deocharan Majhi, MLA (Chainpur)
24. Shri Balia Bhagat, MLA (Sisai)
25. Shri Mukund Ram Tanti, MLA (Ghatshila + Bahragora-1)
26. Shri Sukru Uraon, MLA (Gumla)
27. Shri Ankura Ho, MLA (Jamda)
28. Shri Alfraid Oraon, MLA (Simdega)

29. Shri Chunka hembrom, MLA (Poraihat + Jarmundi)
30. Shri Bhaiyaram Munda, MLA (Tamar)
31. Shri Surendra Nath Birua, MLA (Manjhari)
32. Shri Ignesh Kujur, MLA (Lohardaga)
33. Shri Gokul Mahra, MLC (Mahto, p. 666)

The Singhbhum District Committee of Jharkhand Party too submitted a Memorandum for Jharkhand State to the States Reorganisation Commission. President of the party's District unit Lopo Deogam drafted the Memorandum addressing the Chairman of Commission, asking him not to merge any part of Singhbhum in Orissa or in Bengal—the two Provinces which had already grabbed a lot many parts of Chotanagpur. In the Memorandum, Deogam argued that Orissa and Bengal had forcefully imposed their language and culture on the people of Chotanagpur at many areas thereby killing the long existing language and culture of the region for ever.

On February 2, 1955 States Reorganisation Commission team was scheduled to come to Ranchi. The Two members of the Commission— K.M. Pannikar and Hriday Nath Kunzru, were to come. Jharkhand Party, under the leadership of its President Jaipal Singh, drafted a Memorandum for the Commission and made elaborate preparation with rock-shield arguments to be placed before the Commission. But the craft and cunningness of Bihar Congress leaders played an intrigue, cheating Jaipal Singh and giving a pinch of Bihar politics that Oxford-educated Jaipal could never have ever imagined in life or ever been able to forget it whole life. For Jaipal, it was like nearing so close to his destination and getting cheated away from his goal for ever. Ever since, it has remained shrouded in mystery as to why the far-sighted, insightful, intelligent and brilliant orator Jaipal failed to appear before the Commission on its Ranchi arrival on February 2, 1955. The team remained in Chotanagpur until February 5. On its arrival in Ranchi on February 2, the members were lodged at the Old Circuit House near Kutcehery—Ranchi Civil Court, and from there they toured to places like Khunti, Chakradharpur, Chaibasa, Seraikela, Jamshedpur, Purulia and Dhanbad. They came back to Ranchi on February 5 again, before going back to Delhi.

In the absence of party President Jaipal Singh, Sushil Kumar Bage led a team to meet the two-member Commission in order to hand over the Memorandum for separate State. As narrated by Lal Saheb, on the day when the Jharkhand Party team set out to hand over the Memorandum, 10 lac people, marching from different parts of Chhotanagpur with *Mandar* and *Nagara*, marched from Hinoo to Governor House, singing, dancing and raising slogan in support of Jharkhand.

But, Lal Sahib revealed further, that the Commission wanted the presence of party President Jaipal Singh and did not accept party leader Sushil Kumar Bage, who had been chosen by Jaipal to represent him before the Commission, as his representative. Bage, along with other leaders of Jharkhand Party, in the absence of party President Jaipal, had led a team to the Commission to hand over a copy of the Memorandum for separate State of Jharkhand. Several stories have been built around the incident. Some said Jaipal did not want Jharkhand; others say he did not care for the Commission. But, a man who had sacrificed his family life and wife because of his love for Jharkhand, it was impossible to believe that he did not want Jharkhand. As for whether Jaipal actually cared for the Commission, it is very likely, because, Jaipal knew very well the importance of administrative proceedings.

Then, what exactly made him remain absent from Ranchi?

> 'I wanted to know why Jaipal Singh did not present himself to the States Re-organisation Commission. It was a very difficult task to unveil this mystery, because nearly all leaders of Jharkhand Party, who worked with Jaipal, have already passed way. In my quest I learnt that Sukhdeo Majhi, who was the Jharkhand Party MLA, elected into in Bihar Assembly in 1952 elections from Chakradharpur, was alive. He was now 90 year old. On January 16, 2008, I reached his house in Potka. I asked him why Jaipal Singh did not present himself in front of States Re-organisation Commission when the team of the Commission came to Ranchi in winter of 1955. What he revealed, pained me to no bound. He narrated:

"Jaipal Singh, who was a brilliant leader not only of Jharkhand but of the entire country, was kept away from meeting the States Re-organisation Commission by a craft and intrigue of the Bihar Congress leaders. A day before the Commission was to arrive in Ranchi, Bihar Chief Minister Shrikrishna Singh, accompanied by senior Congress leaders Krishna Ballav Sahay and Vinodanand Jha met Jaipal and told him that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had immediately called them (the trio and Jaipal) to Delhi in order to discuss Jharkhand matters. Jaipal told them that he could not go to Delhi at this time as the team of States Re-organisation Commission was to arrive in Ranchi. The trio convinced Jaipal Singh that he should go to Delhi as none other than the Prime Minister himself has called him. All that will take is just one day and soon after the meeting with the Prime Minister, he can come back on the same day and meet the Commission members too. In a hurry, K.B. Sahay and Vinodanand Jha got Jaipal boarded a government aircraft and took him to Delhi. They kept Jaipal in Delhi saying that the Prime Minister will call him *this after noon, tomorrow morning*...and so on. After waiting for Pundit Nehru's call for two days, when information of the meeting did not come, Jaipal on his own met Nehru on the third day. Jaipal Singh asked Nehru why he had called him to Delhi. Nehru replied to him that he did not know of any such meeting. Jaipal realized that he had been ditched by Shrikrishna Singh. Those days, flight service to Ranchi was not available. That was the third day—February 5, for the States Re-organisation Commission's saty, in Ranchi. Sushil Kumar Bage (Leader of the Opposition in Bihar Assembly),

> Theodore Bodra and Nagannath Mahto Kurmi—both MLAs, wanted to place party's arguments before the Commission. The Commission could have well accepted this established practice, but it obstinately refused to listen to them. The Commission said that they would listen to none other than the President of Jharkhand Party Jaipal Singh. In the absence of Jaipal Singh, the Commission's decision of not accepting Sushil Kumar bage, Theodore Bodra and Jagannath Mahto Kurmi, too, appears a conspiracy. Jaipal Singh could not forgive himself for this mistake in his entire life."'(Mahto, 2016).

The Commission travelled 38,000 miles, meeting more than 10,000 people and receiving 1,52,250 memorandums. It prepared a States Reorganisation Report of 267 pages. In 1956, a States Reorganisation Bill was brought in the Parliament and 14 new States were created. To the crafty design of Shrikrishna Singh, Jharkhand was missing from the list. Ironically, a few hundred yards away from Rajendra Prasad Square in Ranchi, there stands a huge park named after the first Chief Minister that, not a few years back, had become den of criminals only to be relieved in later years by the generous Jharkhand Government. Both the leaders gave Jaipal the taste of real politics at different point of times that he sulked of whole life—that might and intrigue is the only rightful way to do politics and such things as logic and arguments are good only for academic books to be studied in varsities like Oxford alone. Jaipal at Oxford had studied Philosophy, Economics and Politics, but what he had not studied was not to take the words of Bihar Congress leaders as truthful. Jaipal would again be, years later, foxed into another political trap.

The Commission in its report refused the demand for separate State of Jharkhand, giving myriad logics, one of them being language. Tribal languages like Mundari, Santhali, Ho, Kharia, Bhumij—sounded to the Commission members different, though member of one of these tribes could not only understand but also

converse with the other's language. As for Nagpuri, which was the *Lingua Franca* of the region, could not be perceived so, by the team. The team gave a flimsy argument that since *Jharkhand* does not have a single language; it cannot be given separate Statehood in line with other new States that it recommended for. Culture, a common thread that bound Jharkhand, was never deemed fit criterion for the Commission. Due to the distinctive nature among tribes and non-tribesin the region, characterized by peculiarities found no where else across the country, the British had come up with different set of tenancy laws and administrative ruled for Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, but such points were never qualified to be as 'criteria' in the Free India.

The Report also said that the demand of Jharkhand Party for division of Bihar into two was untenable, because, apart from Jharkhand Party, no other political party was in support of it. Interestingly, Congress was the only 'other' important political party. In the Congress too, while the Bihar Proper Congress leaders, for reasons well known, were opposed to State of Jharkhand; while Chotanagpur leaders in the Congress were in its support. The Commission, in stark contrast to the aspirations of the people of Jharkhand, recommended Chotanagpur's Purulia to be merged with West Bengal. The Congress had adopted the same rule with Jharkhand that the British had practised and taught. The leader of the Opposition and Jharkhand Party legislator Sushil Kumar Bage opposed the idea of Purulia from Bihar being ceded to West Bengal, but Bihar Congress leaders including Chief Minister Shrikrisna Singh did not utter a word on it. Prime Minister Nehru, addressing the Nation from Red Fort on August 15, 1956, a day before the a debate in the Lok Sabha on States Reorganisation, said that 'the decision of the Lok Sabha on States Reorganisation is a final and no change can be made on it, come what may'. With this statement of Nehru, all hopes of people and Jharkhand Party to get their dream Jharkhand along with other such aspiring States, ended.

A long cherished dream hardly die, and more someone tries to kill it, the more vividity it gains. The same thing happened with the dream of Jharkhand State. The people and Jharkhand Party

did not lose hope. With renewed vigour, the movement became more intense. Jharkhand Party became stronger and stronger each day, with Adivasis and Non-Adivasi sadans joining hands for the same and the only goal. The goal had no longer remained that of the Adivasis alone, but even for the Sadans as well. In the Assembly and Parliamentary elections of 1957, Jharkhand Party won 34 seats in Bihar Assembly and five in the Lok Sabha. On the suggestion of party General Secretary Ignas Beck, who also was a Member of Parliament, Jharkhand Party in 1958 made Jaipal Singh's wife Jaha Ara a candidate for Rajya Sabha and sent her to the Upper House of the Parliament. Many opine that this was a mistake on the part of Jaipal as his wife, who so far was only a housewife, started playing a bigger role in the party to the distaste of senior leaders. Jaipal, however, kept on chasing his dream Jharkhand. But, the Congress at the Centre and in Bihar laid traps at every step for him. People too were getting disappointed as their dream of Jharkhand and the movement was moving no where. The elections to the Lok Sabha and to Bihar Assembly came in 1962 and Jharkhand Party faired very badly. Out of the 34 sitting legislators, only 22 returned to Bihar Assembly and in the Lok Sabha the number of Jharkhand Party MPs reduced to four. It is believed that the organization was slowly disintegrating and there was misunderstanding among the senior leaders.

After 1962, Jharkhand Party went through a virtual avalance. The Congress had dented into the unity of Jharkhand Party and senior leaders like Sushil Kumar Bage and Theodore Bodra had been converted into Congress sympathizers. The analysis of the voting pattern in 1952 revealed that a large chunk of Catholic Church had turned to Congress enmass. Sushil Kumar Bage, himself a Catholic, Jaipal's trusted lieutenant and one time Leader of the Opposition in Bihar Assembly had crossed over to the Congress, according to Jayant, Jaipal's youngest son. Bage was luring many other legislators into his new found political party. Such leaders, who were not getting any position with Jharkhand Party, were lured away by the Congress, by offering them with party positions and such other benefits. Jaipal himself, after long years of movement and negotiations with the Congress on State

of Jharkhand, was beginning to feel his exercise becoming futile. Disintegration of the party he bore, nurtured and raised was taking place right in front of his eyes.

In 1963, Jaipal received a proposal from Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to merge his Jharkhand Party with the Indian National Congress. However, people like Ranvijay Nath Shahdeo and a few others now still living, who then had observed the political situation, say that the Congress had created a 'between devil and the deep sea' situation for Jaipal. Jaipal was a 'one-man army' against the mighty Indian National Congress. His colleagues were themselves now on look-out for fresh political pastures, and a large chunk of the people he fought for had changed their minds. The Congress had won over the traditional Munda-Mankis—tribal chieftains, too. They along with their followers had voted the Congress enmass. Nehru is said to have told Jaipal that his merger with the Congress will help him achieve his dream. Jaipal thought that a political party may come and go, but the goal is the most important thing. He saw an opportunity in the proposal of Pundit Nehru and agreed to merge Jharkhand Party with the Congress. On merger, Jaipal is supposed to have famously said: 'I will achieve Jharkhand beating the drum of the Congress now'.

Jaipal Singh organized a huge rally in Ranchi and announced to the people about the merger plan of Jharkhand Party with Indian National Congress. People who had arrived from different parts of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana to listen to their fiery leader, just could not believe their ears. This gathering was attended by Bihar Chief Minister Vinodanand Jha, Orissa Chief Minister Biju Patnaik, West Bengal Chief Minister Praful Chandra Sen, and Congress President Damodaran Sanjivaiya.

On June 20, 1963, Jaipal's Jharkhand Party that had steered the Movement of Separate Jharkhand was rendered to the pages of history. It merged with the Indian National Congress. Soon afterwards, he was inducted as a minister by Bihar Chief Minister Vinodanand Jha. But within a month, Jha had to resign due to an issue. K.B. Sahay ascended to power and the first thing he did was to replace Jaipal with Jaipal's onetime lieutenant Sushil Kumar Bage. Luckily, Jaipal had not resigned from the membership

of the Parliament, probably learning a true lesson from his past experience on real Bihar politics.

Meanwhile, on May 27, 1964 Prime Minister Nehru breathed his last, and with this Jaipal's dream to "achieve Jharkhand beating the drum of the Congress" came to an abrupt end. Just before his death, Nehru, with just one stroke of the pen, had undone Jharkhand Movement that Jaipal had taken 24 long years to build. Nehru is accused of 'swallowing up' Jharkhand's Rooster, while Jaipal is accused of 'selling off the Movement'. But, it is difficult to know how honest Nehru would have been with his words to Jaipal on Jharkhand, had he been alive. Similarly, the accusation of 'selling off Jharkhand Movement' appears funny, for Jaipal got nothing substantially political in return. Instead, after the death of Nehru, Jaipal's stature in the new party was reduced to nil. Other leaders of the Congress could not understand Jaipal, nor did they make any honest effort to understand him. For them, Jaipal was just a player in politics and that they played better than him in all respect—in deceit, conceit, craft and intrigue.

—G.K. Chesterton

7
Where Did the Rooster Go?

The winter of 1966 had arrived and the bells of Lok Sabha and Assembly elections had been rung. Lok Sabha elections had to be held in February 1967 and this was the first occasion Jaipal Singh had to go and face the public after he merged his Jharkhand Party with the Congress. People in the entire region of his dream Jharkhand knew of his Rooster, which had been swallowed into the annals of history by the Congress. They knew no other symbol of any political party. Earlier Jaipal had fought the Lok Sabha elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962 under his Jharkhand Party with *Rooster* as the symbol. This election he was going to contest with *Joda Bael*—Twin Bulls, the election symbol of the Congress.

November-December is the time of harvest for Adivasis and Non-Adivasi sadans in Jharkhand. Being mostly agrarian, this time is the best time of the year for them. Men and women come out into their paddy fields and engage hardily in reaping the fruit of their labour. Gestation for some varieties of paddy was December, while other ripenend by January. In the Bano area of Simdega district too, Nature had blessed the people with bumper harvest that year. But Bano that December was anxious and apprehensive for another reason.

A week ago, drum beaters at Bano market beat the drum and informed the people with loud voice: "*Suna, suna bhai bahin man...Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda awathe ho. Unkar sabha agla bazaar din Bano me hoi. Rour sabke neuta dewal jathe*—Listen, listen Brothers and Sisters. Marang Gomke Jaipal

Singh Munda is coming here on the next market day. All of you are invited to listen to him…"

Pabuda, a hamlet, inhabited by Adivasis and Sadans, was situated about three miles south to Bano. Paddy in the fields of this hamlet too had ripened and bumper harvest had brought cheers on the faces of farmers here. Mikhael Kandulna, whose father Joseph Kandulna, a worker in Jharkhand Party, had planned to visit Bano market that week. As a fan of the Marang Gomke, he would not miss any chance to listen to Jaipal Singh. Just like Mikhael, the Marang Gomke's visit was a special occasion for all other villagers. Mikhael assigned his elder son Vincent the task of herding the cattle stock of the family, and himself set out for Bano market early in the morning. A few minutes after his father had left for Bano, Vincent who was a ten-year old smart boy, called his five-year old younger brother Remish and assigned the task of taking the cattle out to graze, throwing the monkey his father had placed on his shoulders on the shoulders of his younger kin. "I have to make some stationary purchase," Vincent told Remish.

All that Remish had for his clothings was a prized *korya*—a piece of cloth around his loins. Most Munda children then did not see pants, and having them was no less than a luxury. Tightening his *korya*, Remish set out with his cattle to the fields.

"After a while, I saw villagers coming out of their houses one by one and marching towards Bano market. My suspicion grew. *There must be something very important today in Bano market.*"

Remish was equally smart. He had four baffaloes to herd. "*I herded them on the paddy fields of Agru Teli, a neighbour and set off for Bano market. I did not take the normal route. I picked up a Sindwar stick and took the forest route.*"

It was around noon and Jaipal Singh was on time for the meeting at Bano market. Remish sneaked through the crowd and reached the centre where Jaipal was seated behind a table along with other leaders.

'*Haga misiko, ando Parha-Raja ko. Soben ko Johargiya*—Brothers and Sisters, and Para-Rajas, I greet you all'—Jaipal began with his mother tongue Mundari. In his usual style, he then

translated the lines into Sadri, the *Lingua Franca* of Chotanagpur. In his address, he asked the people that this time they have to vote on *Joda Bael*—Twin Bulls: '*utne din to hum long Murga Chhap par vote dete the, ab hum Joda Bale par vote denge'*. People, both the Adivasis and the Non-Adivasis loved Jaipal but this time, they had questions in their minds. A while later, Saban Pahan—an elderly tribal priest of Bhikhratoli, stood up in the middle of the speech of Jaipal."*Ye Jaipal Singh Babu, Sunto. Hamar Murga chhaap kaha gelak? Batao nahi to moy vote ni debo*: My son Jaipal Singh, tell me where did our Murga *chhap go*, or else I will not cast my vote", the belligerent Pahan shot a question. Jaipal did not listen to him and went on with his address. The Pahan moved a little towards Jaipal and repeated his query. This time, Jaipal stopped his speech. Two policemen came and forced the Pahan to sit down. *Moy ni baithmu*—I won't sit, he told them sternly. Jaipal asked the cops to leave the man, and explained to him thus:

"*Dekhiye, Jo Murga hum laye the, u Murga bahar ka tha. Wo ud kar bhag gaya*: You see, the Rooster that I had brought was from outside. It flew away."

Pahan said: "*Uidke bhaig delak ki pakay ke khay dele*: Did it fly away or you cooked it."

Jaipal could not satisfy the Pahan, but people there shouted in Mundari: '*Pahan te dubayme, Pahan te dubaiyme*: Make the Pahan sit down, make the Pahan sit down'.

In the vast area of Chhotanagpur where the people had long identified their political aspirations with Murga *chhap*, Jaipal had a very difficult time to explain to them the reasons behind his merger with the Congress. They simply could not believe that their Murga *chhap* no longer existed, and it had been gulped down into the annals of history. The colourful Rooster that travelled with Jaipal in his black ambassador no longer travelled with him now. In place of it, the ambassador sported the emblem of *Joda Bael*. The Congress by this time had managed to make inroads into the tribal society politically. For some strange reason, the Roman Catholic Church was shifting its support from Jaipal, and was reposing its political faith in the Congress. Senior Congress leaders including Rajendra Prasad, soon after Jaipal had formed

his Adibasi Mahasabha, had been trying to win over Jaipal's political base into the Congress. Later, other Congress leaders like Srikrishna Singh engaged all tricks fair and foul to politically weaken Jaipal.

Jaipal managed to win the Lok Sabha election from Khunti with a very thin margin. But that evening when Remish came back home, he found Agru Teli already sitting in the courtyard of his house with a complaint. Remish's mother too was waiting for him with a thick cane. Remish got a good thrashing for disobedience, an incident he recalls even to this day.

To the ordinary people who understood very little of politics and its intricacies, Jaipal's action of merging Jharkhand Party with the Congress looked only strange and unwise. They were there to fight and perish for their goals that Jaipal had set for them. They were not willing to even bend, come what may—including any political undercurrent with potential to wash them away. Wherever Jaipal went, people had the same question on their lips: *Where is our Rooster*? At some places, he managed to show reason, explaining to them the political situation; but at most places, he could not. Still, most people had reposed their faith in him; that whatever he would do, it would be for the good of them. They supported him blindly.

Even after Jaipal had won the Lok Sabha election of 1967, the question as to why he merged Jharkhand Party with the Congress haunted him all through. His nephew Samrai Munda, who stayed with him in Ranchi and studied there in a school, and later became a teacher, recalls how once his uncle got annoyed on an occasion over the same question of Jharkhand Party's merger with the Congress. It was 1969 and Jaipal had gone to Gumla to address a gathering. He had asked Samrai to come with some pamphlets along with another man. When Samrai reached the meeting place, he heard his uncle saying: "You want to know why I had to merge with the Congress? Then listen: I had neither the army nor the wealth. Many party men had deserted the party, many were planning to". "This was the first time I saw my uncle in tears in a public meeting,"Samrai says. "He could not speak further."

The Indian National Congress used the popularity of Jaipal to win over the Adivasis to its party fold. Though Jaipal was very skeptical of industrialization in the Adivasi areas rich with mineral resources that the Congress argued was for the good of the Adivasis, he toed the line of his new party.

After Nehru's untimely death, the Congress sidelined Jaipal more and more. Instead it tried to promote his wife who had been made a Member of Rajya Sabha and then also a Union Minister. Jaipal, disillusioned with the Congress and deserted by his own men whom he had groomed into leaders, felt lonely, dejected, and defeated. The sadness was writ large on his face and could not hide it though he much tried to.

The seed of the idea of Jharkhand that Jaipal had planted in the minds of the people had grown into a huge banyan tree. People were despearate to see the idea of Jharkhand translate into reality, but his new party Congress was not talking about it at all. Instead it was talking about 'development', which Jaipal could fathom would be more for others than for his own people he devoted his entire life for and fought for like a lion. He helpessly watched the unfolding of realties, not able to do anything much on this count. Meanwhile, the Jharkhand Party which had been born, buttered and nurtured into a Movement and later swallowed by the Congress, had found new leaders.

Some Jharkhand Party leaders who were opposed to the merger of the party with the Congress, held a huge gathering in Biramitrapur of Sundergarh district in Orissa on September 27-29, 1963. The gathering decided to re-organise old Jharkhand Party, and Lal Harihar Nath Shahdeo was elected as the President of the new Jharkhand Party that was formed there on that day. Shibu Murmu and Kanhu Kisku—both from Santhal Pargana, were made the Vice Presidents of the party, Lal Ranvijay Nath Shahdeo (*Lal Saheb* as mentioned earlier) was made the Secretary and Paulus Surin (Birmitrapur), Ramnarayan Khalkho (Ranchi), Manidra Nath (Palamau), Clement Toppo (Gumla) became the General Secretaries. Ignas Kujur (Ranchi) was made the Treasurer. The gathering did not speak ill of Jaipal Singh and termed the merger as the outcome of a political ploy of the crafty Congress, though

it admitted that merger was the 'biggest mistake' of Jaipal in his political life. Emerging leader N.E. Horo, a law graduate, defeated Sushil Kumar Bage in Kolebira Assembly seat at the 1967 Bihar Assembly elections and came to the forefront of Jharkhand Movement. After 1967 Assembly elections, it was for the first time that a Non-Congress Government under the leadership of Mahamaya Prasad Singh was put in place. His Government lasted only for ten months. Bindheshwari Prasad Mandal, with the outside support of the Congress, became the Chief Minister and Horo was made a Minister in his Cabinet. On December 28, 1967 Akhil Bharatiya Jharkhand Party was registered as a political party and Bagun Sumbrui given the charge of the Presidentship and N.E. Horo became the General Secretary.

During 1969, the new Jharkhand Party that had been formed and now under the leadership of N.E. Horo, too, went through upheavals. In the same year, mid-term elections of Bihar Assembly were held. Under the Presidentship of Bagun Sumbrui, the party won 11 seats. Bagun Sumbrui decided to support Congress' Sardar Harihar Singh to form the Government. Sardar Harihar Singh offered a Cabinet post to Sumbrui and Subrui accepted it. Party's Horo group alleged that Sumbrui had accepted the ministerial post without the party's formal sanction. Friction between Sumbrui and Horo grew and they decided to part ways. Sumbrui later joined the Congress and the mantle of Jharkhand Movement fell solely on Horo.

By 1969, Jaipal Singh was feeling completely alienated in the Congress. He had well realized by now that he had been very badly cheated. So much was the alienation, old-timers recall, that, at time he would silently arrive at Adivasi Bhawan, the headquarters of Jharkhand Party that was situated beside Ranchi Lake and listen to the conversation of the new Jharkhand Party leaders, standing at the door. Finally by February 1970, Jaipal made up his mind to return to Jharkhand Party and on March 13, he called a meeting of senior Jharkhand Party members at Bardela Bazaar—now Bahu Bazaar. It was at that very spot, St Paul's School located there, that young Jaipal had begun his education life in the patronage of

Canon Cosgrave. He was now holding the last political meeting of his life at this very spot.

"It was a highly secret meeting and only a few senior members of Jharkhand Party had gathered there. Marang Gomke told us that he has been cheated by the Congress and he was not going to get Jharkhand being in that party. So he would come back home. We told him this house had been built by you, and that it was yours. We will accept you as our guardian," recalls Lal Ranvijay Nath Shahdeo, one of the participants of this important meeting. Shahdeo has now touched 90 but his memories of the day are sharp. "The important meeting", says Shahdeo, "even chalked out a detail plan of next phase of Jharkhand Movement now that the Marang Gomke had decided to come back home".

Jaipal then flew to Delhi in order to get some belongings from 9-Ashoka Road, his Official Residence in Delhi. He had decided to stay more in Ranchi than in Delhi, and intensify the movement. None knew then that Jaipal would never take the leadership of Jharkhand Party again, and that some unseen mishap had been waiting at the door. "On the night of March 20, 1970, we got the information from our friends in Delhi that the Marng Gomke was no more," Shahdeo recollects. "The Marang Gomke had promised to come back home. He did, but in a coffin."

According to Shahdeo, Jaipal supposedly had tea and snacks in the morning at his residence along with some old Jharkhand Party colleagues. Jaipal loved potato and it was part of the snacks he took that morning. After the tea he went to the bathroom. When he was coming out of the bathroom, he collapsed and died on the spot. Jaipal was in good health and had no trace of any illness whatsoever when he died. Given the situations and the moments, the meeting with Jharkhand Party leaders at Bardela Bazaar in Ranchi and his final decision to come back and take the leadership of Jharkhand Party again as well as launch Jharkhand Movement again, Jaipal's death makes a mystery. No one quite believed that Jaipal died. An adept sportsman that he was, he was the master of his health and even age had little impact upon it. Congress indeed had managed to give him sleepless nights with craft and deceit—and in that many senior leaders of the day were involved—but

Jaipal knew how to handle tension. After the death of Nehru, Jaipal was convinced that he and his dream of Jharkhand had very little space in the Congress. In vein he had tried to control political tides to his favour over all these years, until his meeting with political colleagues at Bardela Bazaar that saw his mind clearly express for eventual separation from the Congress, after having gone through many deceits.

The death of Jaipal sent a shockwave not only in the Jharkhand of his dream, but across the country. From the dawn of March 21, the day his body was to be flown down to his home city, sea of population from across Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana trooped to Ranchi to get the last glimpse of their Marang Gomke. The leader's body was flown into Ranchi by a chartered plane of Indian Airlines, and a huge population turned up at Ranchi Airport to welcome home the leader, who just seven days back had promised to come back home—to Jharkhand Party. He had kept his word, but, his speeches were no longer to reverberate in the streets and *maidans* across Jharkhand, nor would it in the Parliament, fighting and standing up for the cause of the Adivasis of India, as well as the Non-Adivasi deprived population of Jharkhand that he dreamt and worked for.

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Jaipal Singh shared an intricate relationship with most senior Congress leaders, particularly those who hailed from Bihar. Congress leaders from Bihar looked upon him with a sense of distrust because of his stand on a separate state of Jharkhand. Jaipal Singh and noted Congress leader Rajendra Prasad, who later became the first President of Free India, shared a very sophisticated relationship. However, seasoned and educated leaders as both were, they knew the decorum of public life, and despite political rivalry within the Province of Bihar, they maintained a relationship quite becoming of their stature.

Jaipal Singh and Rajendra Prasad exchanged numerous letters, some personal, others official on important issues of the day.

Ranchi
May 24, 1939

My dear Dr. Rajendra Prasad,

I thank you for your letter of May 18th. I have assured you more than once already that I shall cooperate with anyone who takes up the cause of my people, the Adivasis. You indicated not long ago that Bihar Ministry might avail themselves of my help in respect of the Adibasi problem. Now I am committed to the Adibasi Movement and am the President of the Adibasi Mahasabha.

You say, "I am also anxious to know what they would wish the Government to do to help them". My request to you is to give me suggestions in definite form so that I may consider them and take such steps as may appear to me necessary in that behalf." I am glad to accede to your request.

One immediate problem before us is the situation arising out of the District Board elections. In the Ranchi district, the Adibasi Sabha candidates have an elected majority, 15 Adibasis to 9 Bihar Congress. The Bihar Ministry have to nominate 7 or 8 persons. Everything should be done to preserve the Adibasi majority and the Adibasi Sabha should be consulted about the elections.

In the Singbhum district the results are level so far and the nominations should, if anything should go infavour of the Adibasi majority.

The Adibasis are immediately concerned with the Labour Inquiry Committee and their acrediated representatives should be in it.

There are no Adibasis in the University Senate although his Excellency the Chancellor has 15 nominations at his disposition. Adibasis should be also given nominations.

In the Lac Committee Adibasis should be nominated. They are the growers of shellac.

A Degree College was promised for Ranchi. The promise should be implemented without any further delay.

The Information Officer should public immediately full particulars of appointments given to Adibasis, following the form he adopted in the case of Bengalis, Moslems and Biharis.

A Financial Statement of Revenue and Expenditure should be published to show the comparative position of the aboriginal

tracts, Bihar proper and the entire Province. Steps should be taken to give adequate representatives to Adibasis in the Government, Legislatures, Services etc., in the proportion of their numbers.

Government must be neutral in regard of all missions—Hindu, Moslem, Christian, Buddhist, Brahmo Samaj, or any other. The recent propaganda of the Bihar Congress against the Christian mission in particular should be investigated.

Only those who are aquanted with the peculiar problems of the aboriginal tracts and are avowedly friendly to the backward tribes should be posted in the partially excluded area. This is essential for the peace and good governance of the people.

Rural welfare workers should, as far as possible, be aboriginals. It is absurd to think a caste Hindu can ever be better worker amidst conditions alien to his susceptibility.

Aboriginal identity must be preserved at any cost. Immediate measures should be adopted to promote aboriginal culture. The statistical confusion that now exists in respect to the numerical strength of the aborigines should be removed. An aborigine by adopting Hinduism, Islam or any other religion does not cease to be an Adibasi. Census data are inaccurate. Development of education, irrigation, cooperative endeavours, economic freedom at hoc genusomne is so important and universally recognized that it is hardly necessary that I should have to remind you or anyone else who is truly anxious to work for Swaraj. Rural indebtedness is deepest among the aborigines.

I have given above only a few instances of the dire needs of the Adibasis. There are a thousand different ways of helping my people. Mere words and promises are not enough. A change of heart, a real yearning for the uplift of Adibasis and shown in actual endeavour is what is wanted. Facts show abundantly that the Bihar Ministry are more concerned with Bihar proper. The Adibasis do not come within their scheme of things. I regret I have to mention the Bengali-Bihari controversy. There is genuine feeling throughout the Province and outside that only Biharis matter now. I am making this statement not on mere hearsay, but after a careful study of what is going on in regard to employment in areas like Tatanagar.

I have repeatedly announced in public that the Indian National Congress is sadly failing in its duty to the backward areas by neglecting them, by leaving them out of count in the body politic and by erring from its fundamental principles of Swaraj, truth and non-violence. We all desire Purna Swaraj. The Bihar Ministry is doing all it can to destroy self-determination of the Adibasis. The basest motives are attributed to us. For centuries we have been plundered and we had hoped the Indian National Congress would have made an honest attempt to help us move forward to take our station of honour in the national life of India.

Yours sincerely,

Jaipal Singh

(Ref. Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 3, ndp, pg 75)

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Ranchi
June 14, 1939

My dear Dr. Rajendra Prasad,

When I saw you in Ranchi I placed before you the aims and objects of the Adibasi Sabha to assure you that the Adibasi Sabha was in full harmony with the principles of the Indian National Congress. The people of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana, the Adibasis and Non-Adibasis, want Purna Swaraj as much for India as for their own home territories. They want a place of honour in the national life of India. Our movement is thoroughly democratic. The recent elections in Ranchi and Singbhum, the only districts we did contest, have amply vindicated the claims of the Adibasi Sabha that the Bihar Ministry have lost the confidence of our people.

The important question is that Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas should have an entity and independent representation in the Indian National Congress. This can be done by making Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas into a separate Congress area. The present situation of our being enslaved to Bihar proper is not only unjust but altogether intolerable. The Adibasi tracts can never be represented otherwise [than] by delegates of the Adibasis who form three-fourth of the population.

Once we are made into a Congress province, separate and redeemed from Bihar, the question of a Governor's province for Jharkhand can be studied and implemented from within the Indian National Congress such as is happening in Madras for Andhra. The Adibasis are convinced that their political and economic [emancipation lies] in separation. I shall be glad to send you a memorandum in this connection.

Yours sincerely,
Jaipal Singh.

(Ref. Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 3, p. 128)

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July 3, 1939

Dear Mr. Jaipal Singh,

I discussed with Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru your letter regarding Gangpur shooting tragedy. He has already replied to you. I am writing this to ask you, if it is possible for us to meet and discuss this matter.

As the victim of this tragedy were our Christian brethren, I immediately moved in this matter and it was at my request that Pundit Jawaharlal wrote to the Political officials of Orissa suggesting a Committee of Inquiry consisting of Dr. F.X. Desouza, M.L.A. (Central), Mr. Shrikisen Mehtab and myself. On official refusal he asked whether I could proceed purley on a mission of mercy and even this was not allowed.

We cannot however leave our afflicted folks and it is proposed that I should visit Ranchi to make whether inquiries are possible before proceeding further. We are grateful for your kind interest and I hope we can meet together and see what is possible.

I may say that I have tried to get in touch with Mr. Tirkey of Lutheran Mission to whom I was referred by my friend Rev. Balasundaram of the Bible Society here, but have had no response.

I can, as my programme stands at present, be free to visit Ranchi between 20th and 25th. Will you kindly let me hear from you if these dates will provisionally suit you?

Yours sincerely,
Rajendra Prasad

(Ref. Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 3, p. 142)

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July 3rd, 1939
Camp: Chapra

My dear Mr. Jaipal Singh,

I have received your letter dated the 14th June 1939 in due time. I do not quite understand what you mean when you say that the Adibasi Sabha was in full harmony with the principles of the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress has got its constitution and its branches all over the country. It has got also one or two organisations which it has started but which are working more or less as autonomous bodies. I do not know how the Adibasi Sabha can be said to be in harmony with the Indian National Congress when it thought fit to set up candidates against the Congress candidates. I do not make any comments on the inference which you draw from the result of the District Board elections in Ranchi. But it is somewhat difficult to find an organisation fighting another in open contest and yet claiming to be in harmony with it!

As regards your proposal to send a memorandum regarding the Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas, I shall give it due considerations when I receive it. I expect to be in Ranchi from 6th July and possibly will remain there during August also.

Yours sincerely,
Rajendra Prasad

(Ref. Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 3, p. 142)

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Dr. Rajendra Prasad
To B.S. Gilani,
Camp: Giridih
27th July 1939

My dear Shri Gilani,

I am glad to receive your letter dated July 21. I met the Catholic Bishop Father Sevryn and also Father De Moulder and

had a long talk with them. They both assured me that Catholic missionaries were not permitted to take part in it or to associate themselves with, any party politics. Their business was simply propagation of their religion and so long as there would be no interference with that, they had nothing to do with politics. I told them that there was no question of an interferance with any religion or with the preaching of any religion and I also mentioned to them that their sentiments regarding prohibition had been respected. They expressed themselves wholly satisfied with the Government attitude on that point. They also told me that any individual case where any had transgressed instructions were to be brought to the notice of the Bishop. I understand from the Bishop that the misunderstanding regarding the attitude of the missionaries was also due to Shri Jaipal Singh who in one of his speeches had declared that he had the backing of the missionaries in the Adivasi movement. I did not know till then that he had said this. The Prime Minister had read a report of speeches of his and in one of his speeches (the Prime Minister) had referred to this matter. The Bishop recognized that the Prime Minister was perfectly justified in taking Shri Jaipal Singh's words and mentioning this publicly. I suggested to them that to remove misapprehension on this point they should publicly repudiate this statement of Shri Jaipal Singh which he had made as the President of the Adivasi Sabha while presiding over the Conference. From what I heard from Ranchi I can say that Shri Jaipal Singh has been losing ground and I should not be surprised if after a little while he disappears from the scene altogether. But this is between you and me. There is a movement among the non-Christain aborigines to cut themselves away from the Adivasi Sabha. One of their important leaders has already done so. I only hope that this would not develop into a feud between Christians and non-Christians. The people in-charge of Adivasi movement have made the mistake of claiming too much for the Christians. Thus, of the fifteen adivasis returned on the adivasi tickets to the District Board, no less than nine or ten, that is, two-thirds are Christians although their population is not more than one-fourth or one-third of the total population of the adivasis in the district of Ranchi. This was not noticed during the excitement

of the election when all joined in fighting the Congress. Now that the excitement is over the non-Christians are looking at the result calmly. They have begun to feel that they are being exploited. It would be an unfortunate thing if this movement finally gains strength.

Thanking you for your interest, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Rajendra Prasad.

(Ref. Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 3, p. 194)

8
The Goal That Was, and Is

Tread where you may on Nagpur ground,
From farthest west to the wild Singbhum;
Or North to Biru, but still is found,
Some ancient ruins, sasans or mound,
To tell the things that were.

Great men and women do not do great works because they want to be remembered, respected and worshipped. Doing great works for greater good of their people is in their very habit. Jaipal Singh shared this quality that any other great man born on earth was blessed with. Autopsy of life and works of great people is not an easy task, and it has to be done with greater generosity and little bias, keeping in mind the situation that prevailed around the life of the person. And in this, it is easier said than done.

Jaipal, unlike other great men of India who began from the bottom and rose up, began from a pinnacle and came down. When many leaders in their youth were just launching themselves in public life, Jaipal had already become a world-famous name to reckon with, right in his mid 20s, by captaining India and winning Filed Hockey Summer Olympics for India in 1928. Hockey Legend Major Dhyan Chand was a member in the hockey team that Jaipal captained. Jaipal talks very generously about Dhyan Chand, saying that he 'scored astronomically'. He also recalls how Dhyan Chand had only one pair of trousers when he along with Sukat Ali, another famous player, reached England for Olympics in Amsterdam, and Jaipal graciously took him to showroom to buy a pair of trousers. Amsterdam Olympics was the only hockey

incident for India in which the iconic players won Gold without conceding a single goal to any opponent that took part in that Olympic.

Even after quitting ICS because the British India Government wanted Jaipal to repeat a term as he had broken it due to his partake in 1928 Olympics, Jaipal could well have joined the Indian National Congress and captured high government posts in Free India like any other leaders of the day. But, he instead chose to stand by his people—the Adivasis, whom neither the Indian National Congress nor the India Government, thought worth for anything. Jaipal well knew that he was going to risk his relationship with his wife Tara and his in-laws as the family's grand-man Woomesh Chandra Bonerjee—father of his mother-in-law Agnes, being the founder President, was staunch Congressman. He had no choice if he had to live a life his mentor and guardian Burah Sahib, Canon Cosgrave had thought for him when he took young Jaipal to England in 1908. Jaipal loved his people more than he loved his wife Tara. He well knew that his wife Tara, given to the comforts of elite society of the day, may not come to Jharkhand which at that time was thought to be a *jungle full of ants*. In fact, Chotanagpur even today has lots of ants all over. Wooden doors of furniture of houses, if left unattended for a year, would certainly fall victims to ants. Not only this, huge living trees often become prey to these creatures. Jaipal knew that he would be a one-man army when he stands up against mighty political, social and economic powers of the day, for the interest of his Adivasi kin. Given the life of comfort Jaipal had been accustomed to, when he came back home to take charge of Adivasi Mahasabha, even people like Rajendra Prasad thought that he would not persist long in his perilous job of leading the most downtrodden and exploited group, the Adivasis. 'They were mistaken,' Jaipal later said. When Jaipal rode his car into his native, Takra Pahantoli, to see his mother on his arrival back home, the dilapidated and dusty road barely existed. Two clean and leveled roads from Ranchi link Takra now. Ranchi district too has been bifurcated into two: Ranchi and Khunti, and Takra falls on the borders of the two, in Khunti territory. Forests have drastically thinned and the

wild Roosters which once lived in them, no longer crow. They too have been swallowed by the frenzy process of development. Wildlife is a dream equally wild. However, the hamlet has not changed any bit. Same old tiled roof and thatched walls, clustered into an expanse that looks humbler than many other villages across the very State that once had been conceived by a son of this very hamlet. No government representative ever visited this hamlet, neither in the days of United Bihar, nor today, even after the Jharkhand of Jaipal's dream became a reality. Villagers reveal that electricity arrived in Takra only three years ago. But power visits them only occasionally. Ministers, least those who occupied the Chief Minister's post, ever travelled on roads that lead to this village, though Ranchi where they bark their orders from, is barely a few dozen miles away.

"We erected this memorial stone soon after he died. Ever since, it has remained stuck here. It traces the geneology of our hero Jaipal Singh," says Mahendra Pahan, Jaipal's grandnephew, pointing to the Memorial Stone. The Mundas call it Pathal Gadi (menhirs). Upon the death of a person, a stone is erected in his name. The Memorial Stone of Jaipal Singh is any thing but impressive, if one goes by the memorials of the likes of leaders he debated with. It is a rugged stone of ordinary make. But for his kin, it is a stone that reminds them everyday of a great son that their Takra ever produced. Governments never thought it wise to spend a penny for any kind of Memorial for this Olympic winning British India captain, whose lone voice once thundered in the Parliament for the exploited and the oppressed. Neither did the Government of Jharkhand think it wise to.

As one moves into the village, men and women from households come out and give a curious "no one ever comes here, who are you?". You tell them that you have come to visit the village of Jaipal Singh, and that cheers them up, and they open up.

"Whenever he was in Ranchi, he used to come to visit us in the village. He would come with loads of fruits—apple, orange etc in a huge bamboo basket. He would also bring sweets for us. And yes, he would not forget to bring his pet, a German Shepherd, who was so friendly to us," recalls Jaipal's grandniece Salumani

Nag. "Another guest that used to arrive in every time he came was his Rooster." Salumani had been busy to clean her house. Whose house is this? "This was Dadu's house." She moves into it, takes a feel, comes out with teary eyes. The two-storey building of Jaipal Singh, where he lived as a child, and which used to be the symbol of status and power in later years, has fallen off into rubbles. After the sudden death of Jaipal, the big family that once lived here jointly, fretted away into smaller units. The memory of the brilliant old days stands only as rubbles now.

"Where has he been buried?"

"Oh, you passed by it." This time, many of Jaipal's grandnephews and grandnieces, join.

"*I missed his tomb, though I passed by it*!" grief simply overtakes one for one's inattentiveness. They lead you to a place with a small boundary wall, located at the centre of the village. This is their *sasandiri*—where all the ancestors of Takra rest in peace. A sasandiri is the sacred brurial ground of the Mundas. Here rest the spirit of the dead ancestors. According to Munda belief, the spirits of the dead live in the midst of their kin and guide them every moment of their lives. Only the person dies, not their souls. According to Munda philosophy, human soul has three layers—umbul (shade), *roa* (soul) and *ji* (life principle).When a person is asleep, his roa (soul) goes roams about and what he comes across is what the Mundas call 'dream'. The *umbul* and *ji* never leave the body during sleep, and they keep the body alive. Just before he wakes up, the roaming roa enters the body back. If it does not, the person may die. So, a sleeping person should not be awakened abruptly, and time should be allowed for the roa to come back into the body. When a Munda breathes his last, all the three layers: *umbul*, *roa* and *ji*, leave the body and render it lifeless. The *umbul* has to be welcomed back into the house through a ritual. The roa and the *ji* remain alive happily in the midst of their kin, and when these are happy, happiness reigns the village. If they are unhappy, village may be ruined. Therefore, the *Sasandiri* in a Munda village is very sacred; and hence taken good care of.

Upon reaching the *Sasandiri*, the villagers find that there hangs a huge lock on the gate, and the person who has the key,

is away. "We keep the gate locked, lest someone may defile the *sasandiri*," explains an elderly kin, and assigns a boy to look for the person and get the key. A few minutes later, he appears with a broad smile on his face, and a bunch of keys in his hand. The gate opens to some half an acre of field, they call *sasandiri*. Flat stones have been placed here and there, some stones are erect. We gather at the middle of the sasandiri, where on the ground lies a huge flat stone (*diri*), with turmeric (*sasan*). This is the *sasandiri*—tomb, of Jaipal Singh Munda. This is where the voice that roared for the Adivasis both inside the Parliament as well as outside, silently rests for ever.

In peace! Or in turmoil?

"His wish was that he be buried beside his mother Radhamuni of Palna. He has been, as per his wish, buried in between his father and his mother. The one on the side belongs to his second wife Jaha Ara," the kin point to the *diris* (stones) and explain.

Jaha Ara, who was a Union Minister when Jaipal died, had lived to see Jharkhand getting born on November 15, the year 2000. She lived in the village of her husband in her old age, when the State was getting created. But, as the villagers allege, the new bunch of political men who were riding to power on the night of November 14, did not remember her. For that matter, the BJP Government that was saddled on to power after the creation of Jharkhand had not bothered to remember many of Jharkhand Movement leaders, including N.E. Horo, who took forward Jharkhand Movement in post-Jaipal phase.

"No one had the courage to dig the grave for Jaipal though his body was to arrive in Takra that evening. No one believed that he was no more. All wanted to first see him," recalls Dinabandhu Lohra, now 95, and still going strong. Dinabandhu is a lawyer by profession who still practises in Ranchi Civil Court, and used to fetch gudu machri (small fish) from rivulets of Bundu, a place to the east of Takra. Jaipal loved gudu *machri* because 'they made good curry'."On Sundays, when I went home from Ranchi, I would collect a few friends and go to nearby rivulet to catch *gudu* fish for Jaipal *dada*. On Monday morning, I used to visit his

Seramtoli house to hand him over the catch, his favourite gudu," Dinabandhu's fainting memories recoil.

Jaipal was a born hockey talent. But his kin in Takra do not recall any story surrounding Jaipal's hockey feat in the village. They say Jaipal must have picked up hockey after he had moved out to Ranchi and joined St Paul's School. Had he played hockey in the village as a child, there must have been some story of his superior hockey skill. Besides, many of his kin in village play football, and not hockey. The huge ground that greets visitors, right at the entry point to Takra is usually flooded with children and teens in the evenings, playing soccer. But, symbols of hockey stick have been carved out on the walls of the village *sasandiri*. The world may have forgotten the Rooster Jaipal built his political philosophy around, but not the Takra villagers. Symbols of the Rooster have been created all over the *sasandiri* boundary wall, alongside symbols of hockey sticks.

Barely a few furlongs away to the west of the *Sasandiri* lies the old primary school where child Jaipal began his schooling from. It belongs to Church of North India and is still going strong in its mission. It is another matter that Jaipal's *alma mater* hasn't produced another Jaipal after him. The original school building has collapsed, but in place of it the villagers have built a new one. However, the new one itself has become very old, giving itself a heritage look. In the entire area, that is the only primary school even today. The country's *Adivasis*, including his own men in the State of Jharkhand, which he conceived and worked hard to bring out of the womb of history, have effortlessly rendered Jaipal to complete oblivion. Lakhs of these men enjoy benefits of special policy of the Government and reservation facility in education and jobs every year, but one fails to fathom why they take no pains to even recall the great man who very emphatically deserves a high place in history. Jaipal was the one who untiringly advocated to safeguard their interest and posterity, both inside the Parliament and outside. 'Do what you like, but do not expect gratitude'. Jaipal's mother's wisdom had predicted it, though she never stood in the way of her son delving into politics to accord socio-political rights the Adivasis yearned. Same goes with the Governments—Union

and the State. Not a memorial in his name, except some flimsy stadiums in Ranchi. Apart from these, the State Government has erected another monument in his name in his native Takra: a two-room health-sub centre, doors of which mostly remain closed and feasted upon by ants. The Marang Gomke sleeps voiceless now, in complete contrast to his nature. His Adivasi kin have woken up to the call of the Rooster he engaged in the job, but they seem to have turned deaf, dumb and mute to the voiceless call of their hero that comes from his grave.

Jaipal proudly carried the values of the society he was born into, wherever he went. He built his political and social philosophy around the same value that he received from the Adivasi society.

"As a *jungli*, as an Adibasi," said Jaipal, "I am not expected to understand the legal intricacies of the Resolution. But my common sense tells me that every one of us should march in that road to freedom and fight together. Sir, if there is any group of Indian people that has been shabbily treated it is my people. They have been disgracefully treated, neglected for the last 6,000 years. The history of the Indus Valley Civilization, a child of which I am, shows quite clearly that it is the new comers — most of you here are intruders as far as I am concerned — it is the new comers who have driven away my people from the Indus Valley to the jungle fastness..."

The Resolution, to Jaipal, was simply a modern restatement of his own people's point of view. In the *adivasi* society, there was no discrimination by caste and gender. They always chose their leaders and representatives by consensus, sitting under a tree or on a hill, discussing and debating on the proposal of one of them. Even the women had say in such crucial meetings. Thus "you cannot teach democracy to the tribal people; you have to learn democratic ways from them."

Jaipal at a discussion on the draft Constitution had made this speech which was highly spirited. It was on this famous speech of Jaipal that supposedly made the Constituent Assembly consider giving a portion of government jobs and seats in legislatures reserved for scheduled tribes, also extended for scheduled castes, as a matter of compensatory justice.

Jaipal Singh's work in bringing the tribal question to centre stage is now largely forgotten. Reading the constituent assembly debates forcibly brings him back to one's attention. Jaipal engaged a very traditional method to build his Jharkhand Party and to raise party funds. Jharkhand Party men in far flung villages collect *ek sup dhan* (one winnow rice) from each household, showing the Rooster symbol, and this used to go to the party fund. This way, every household got instantly connected with the party and its movement.

There is another reason Jaipal is hard to be forgotten, not only by his oblivious *adivasi* kin but the larger Indian society. The outstanding hockey talent, an Oxford Blue, set India on a glorious journey in international hockey which saw numerous big names from his country.

'I was still a small boy and that Sunday we were playing hockey in our village ground. Rashi Birhod, a Bir-hod tribeman of a distant village, after selling off his forest products in Bano market, was going back home. When he saw us playing hockey, he felt like playing. He borrowed my hockey stick and I happily gave it to him. I used to have two hockey sticks and after handing over to him the one I was playing with, I picked up the other. He dribbled the ball past some players and stopped the ball suddenly. Curiously, all of us gathered around him to know where he learnt this hockey skill from.

"Jaipal Singh has taught me," he said, raising his chin proudly.

"Where did he teach you? I asked".

He pointed to the east.

"Ghutbahar?"

He nodded in affirmation.

Ghutbahar was a village situated in deep forest beyond Thethaitangar in Simdega district, where Birhods lived. Birhods are a primitive tribe who lived on roots and fruits of the forest; now they have started doing cultivation.

"How did he teach you?"

"He used to plant five-six poles on the ground in a curvy manner and you have to dribble past them with a clean cut, without touching either of them, at a high speed,"' recounted Remish.

Remish now resides in Ranchi and works in a college.

For Jaipal, sports were very close to his heart. "Somehow or the other I have been appreciated more outside my home area. I have never hankered for honours but it amused me to find I was ignored at Ranchi," Jaipal recalls. Jaipal was founder-member Bengal Hockey Association and the Maharaja Cup. "I think this is the oldest Cup in Hockey world." He was the president of Delhi Flying Club, Delhi Football Association, the Delhi and District Cricket Association. "There was method in the madness. Everyone in the association was financially unsound and they thought my reputation would rehabilitate them," Jaipal later wrote.

Jaipal meanwhile got a crazy idea, like the one he had for the rajkumars when he was the Principal of Rajkumar College, Raipur. This time he wanted to hold a cricket match for Parliamentarians. To his amusement he found there were many cricketers in the Parliament like the Maharaja of Durgapur and Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia. In fact the Indian Parliament always had some; this tradition lives even to this day. Parliamentary Sports Club was formed with Prime Minister Nehru as the Chairman and President as the Patron and Jaipal himself as the Manager. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was made a member of the executive committee. Jaipal planned a match between Prime Minister's XI and the Vice President's (then Dr. Radhakrishnan) XI. Jaipal got special blazers and caps made for the VIP players, including one for the Prime Minister. Each of them was supposed to have paid for the blazers and caps. "Characteristics 'native' problem cropped us. Kaka Gadgil, a Cabinet Minister, insisted on playing in *dhoti*. Gopalan, the Communist leader, had never worn boots. Rajkumari and Begum Aizaz Rasool insisted on their inclusion. A deputation of Nehru's admirers demanded he should not play. I took the decision without consulting anybody. Nehru wanted to play. Let him play. No *dhotis* in cricket. I bought Bata shoes for Gopalan. I promised the women I would not leave them out if I could not get twenty two men players. I said they could even umpire," Jaipal writes in a book. Jaipal gives vivid description of the way the cricket match between Prime Minister's XI and Vice-President's XI in a small memoir.

'The brochure was a big job. Anthony de Mello took charge of this. I got a letter from the Prime Minister. "Tony" got hundreds of advertisements, and we made nearly fifty thousand on this one item. Tony, Honorary General Secretary of the National Sports Club of India, arranged *a la* Parliament seating in the National Stadium Gallery for distinguished visitors, for Speaker's guests, officers' box and the President's box. There was, of course, the team seats. Lala Sir Sri Ram, big businessman undertook to lunch us. Beer, I got free from Dyer Meakin.

Printing the tickets was also a problem. In Delhi and perhaps elsewhere, it is a money-making business. I asked Tony and he gave me one of his many stooges. Twenty-five thousand one rupee tickets were for the hoi polloi. Then, ten and five rupee tickets for the *Bhawnagar Pavilion*. I arranged for one row of thousand rupee tickets just behind the teams. Every ticket was sold. Maharajahs were too keen to sit near the Prime Minister. I had no difficulty with the twenty-five thousand one-rupee tickets. I gave them to P.L. Mehta, the Delhi police chief, and got twenty-five thousand rupees!

Other tickets also created a problem. I signed every one of them. No one could get in free. The President of the Republic bought eighteen ten rupee tickets. It was a match for charity. Even the players were not exempt.

The President, a great lover of sports, arrived by the front lane. I presented the two teams to him. Radhakrishnan put on the cricket cap! The two captains had to go out to the field for the toss. Nehru, the Harrovin, inspected the pitch and Tony had his famous comments. A gold sovereign donated by Polodar, the left hand bowler, decided in Nehru's favour. Majithia and M.K. Krishna went and thrashed the bowling. An Indian crowd is not interested in the finer points of cricket. They want boundaries. Majithia gave them the boundaries. The spectators were not interested in cricket as such. They only wanted to see

the national hero in action with the lot. I put him in with Gopalan. Gopalan had never played cricket in his life.

Shah Nawaz bowled to Nehru. The first ball he completely missed. The second ball just contacted his bat and he scored two. The third ball, Nehru missed, and went to gully. He ran, Gopalan would not run. When the ball was thrown back to the wicket keeper, Barrow, he would not stump Nehru and threw the ball to the boundary. I declared the innings!

The Maharaja of Dungarpur captained Vice-President's side. He opened the innings. General Maharaja Ajit Singh bowled from the NSCI end. The very first ball the Maharaja hit up into the air straight in my direction. It was an easy catch, but I missed it. Keshav Malaviya came in third. He was a left-hander. He was caught by Nehru. The crowd applauded pandemoniously. For months, Nehru talked of the catch.

The women insisted on playing. Begum Aizaz Rasool had turned up in trousers. She is now head of women's hockey. I disappointed them. Instead, I asked them to sell the brochures. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Renu Chakrawarty topped the sales.

All-India Radio broadcast the match. The Speaker, Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, was introduced by the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagram, an old Test player. Nehru also spoke. I also had to make my comments. Hirendranath Chattopadhyaya amused us all with tropical limericks.

The umpires were General Rajendra Singhji and Anthony de Mello, "Tony", founder of the Board of Cricket Control of India.

One incident annoyed me. The Home Minister Dr. Katju, turned up without any ticket. At the main gate the police dared not stop his car. When the car came to the main stadium entrance he was not allowed in. A senior

policeman rushed upto me. I went down and told Dr. Katju he could not possibly be let in without a ticket. His private secretary produced the money.

The Prime Minister dined with us. His catch was on everyone's lips. The match, the lunch at the National Stadium and the dinner, achieved a great thing. They brought together all political parties and a friendly atmosphere developed in both Houses of Parliament.'

Jaipal was also the president of Delhi Flying Club. Later, his son Birendra in 1974 would join a flying school in England to train as commercial pilot.

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Jaipal Singh has been unkindly denied his historical place, and the very people he fought for, do not understand him properly. While few know this maverick genius, the present generation completely does not know him, even in Jharkhand and other tribal-concentrated states across the country too.

Jaipal was a 'one-man army' and he had few to consult with on big decisions he had to take. While men opposed to him were powerful and crafty, Jaipal's followers were simple-hearted and could not much understand the intrigue and ploy often set by them against their own leader.

Among people in Chotanagpur who helped Jaipal in walking on the path he chose for himself, Babu N.N. Rakshit figures prominently. He was an industrialist from Jamshedpur who co-owned Tatanagar Foundry with Jagannath Agarwal. Rakshit appreciated Jaipal Singh's goal of separate Jharkhand and he supported him through various ways. On the behest of Rakshit, Jaipal also turned into a Trade Union leader, mobilizing and uniting the adivasi workers into a separate trade union, raising their issues and fighting for their cause. His grip over the adivasi workers of the union was profound. Jaipal found himself often pitched against Congress leader and trade unionist Abdul Bari, who is supposed to have given sleepless nights to the foundry owners through workers' strikes. It was where the foundry owners sought the service of Jaipal, who often foiled Bari's strikes through the trade union of

the adivasi workers who stood with the management when others did not. Jaipal demanded more employment for adivasis, the 'most ancient aristocracy of India' (Simion, p.28). On December 3, 1939 Subhash Chandra Bose, arrived in Jamshedpur amidst throes of a labour problem. 'On December 4, Bose addressed a rally of 5000 Adivasis under the presidentship of Jaipal Singh. He was critical of the Congress High Command and 'suffused with militia nationalism he reminded the Adivasis of the struggle of their forefathers against the Englishmen' (ibid, p. 27).

In the initial days of his entry into politics, Jaipal kept relations with Muslim League. But while the Muslim League had its own interest with Adibasi Sabha and Jaipal, Jaipal had his own interest with the Muslim League. Their interests were opposed to that of one another's and hence the two could not walk together for long. Muslim League leader 'Suhrawardy tried to secure an assurance from Jaipal that in the event of trouble spreading he must be sure of Adibasi support to the fullest extent. Jaipal Singh's intension was to exploit the League for fund but it appeared that he was not prepared to involve adivasis in riots for the League (evidently for manufacturing weapons). But he gave them an evasive reply' (Sinha, p 292). Jaipal was supposed to have been invited by the League for one of its meetings in Calcutta, and he joined it. But when he realized that the League wanted to use him for 'spreading riots', he is supposed to have fled the very night.

Jaipal Singh's life and work has inspired scholarly works by quite a few researchers and writers, though in patches and fragments. Some research scholars too have chosen Jaipal Singh to research upon and come up with a few works. But such men and women are only a few, like Sumati Tigga, a retired professor of Ranchi Women's College, Ranchi, and Sultan Ahmed, a retired teacher of St Paul's School, Ranchi—the very cradle that groomed child Jaipal. Tigga's topic was: Life and Times of Jaipal Singh, Ph. D. Thesis, in Ranchi University (1990). Sultan Ahmed too did a Ph.D. on Jaipal Singh's Life and Works.

Some writers have put Jaipal Singh's persona and works succinctly in the following words:

Pandey and Kumar (1992) reveal that Mr. Jaipal Singh distinguished himself in a number of branches such as academics, sports, politics in which laurels were conferred upon him, adhered him to the people who almost worshiped him.

Sachidanand (1976) reveals Jaipal's excellent career made the tribals in Bihar feel that he had some exceptional power;or else he could not have achieved so many distinctions in foreign lands. It was thus he came to be regarded as the reincarnation of 'Birsa Bhagwan' and subsequently acknowledged as the 'Marang Gomke" (Supreme Leader) of the tribal people.

Sachidanand (1979:244) again reveals that Jaipal Singh, who emerged as a prominent Munda leader of the Jharkhand Movement in 1939, combined both local and cosmopolitan attributes in his personality. The tribal masses who were leaderless for about four decades after the Birsa Movement, accepted him as supreme leader and designated him as 'Marang Gomke'. These factors enabled him to consolidate the educated Mundas under his able leadership. He made efforts to evoke the primordial sentiments of the tribals to unite them.

Vidyarthy (1967) conducted a study on the 'Tribal Leadership'.This study was based on the empirical study. A scientific questionnaire was developed for the in depth study and this study was sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Research, New Delhi. There were a few questions regarding the opinion of the people about the liking of leadership. There were 17 names of the then existing leaders in the questionnaire. Out of the 17 persons named in the list, seven belonged to the converted tribal group, nine to non-converted and Hindus, and one was a Muslim. Among these leaders S. K. Bage and Jaipal Singh secured the first two highest responses as 'leaders' from all sections of the inhabitants of Ranchi. The top two leaders belonged to the converted Christian tribal community and were highly educated. The converted and non-converted tribal respondents showed their preference for converted tribal leaders. The respondents selected these two leaders due to three reasons: first, they were good persons with good behaviour; secondly, they were honest leaders with a sense of responsibility; and thirdly, they were "their

own tribal men". This indicates the popularity of Sri Jaipal Singh among the people.

Vidyarthy and Sahay (1978) reveal that the leadership of the Jharkhand Party under the Jaipal Singh was gradually secularized, which marked a significant turn of event in the history of Jharkhand Movement, though in the beginning, it remained dominated by the Christians. How? The Jharkhand Party, as a result of its experience at many meetings, realized the need for bringing about a change in the programme to attract the increasing non-tribal and industrial population of the city. It is significant that while on the one hand the Jharkhand Party, specially in the city area of Ranchi, was trying to absorb the non-converted tribal leaders and masses by emphasizing some of the important values of the Tribal culture, on the other they also tried to gain the support of the non-tribal masses by emphasizing the needs of the region and by directing their attention to the injustices that were done to the backward areas of Chotanagpur. A new leadership model was emerging under the increased impact of urbanization and industrialization.

Sinha (1991) says Jaipal Singh was elected to the Constituent Assembly, Delhi and came into contact of top notch Indian leadership which opened his eyes and stemmed his turbulence. The spell of Nehru and Patel, Amedkar etc, made Jaipal an embodiment of national tribal aspiration to the Constituent Assembly.

Sardar Patel declared to the Constituent Assembly that "*I would like to make one thing clear: Is it the intention of people who defined the cause of the tribal to keep the tribals permanently in their present state? I do not think it is in their interest to do so. I think it would be our endeavour to bring the tribal people to the level of Mr. Jaipal Singh.*"

Roy (1992) reveals that the tribal political awakening reached its culmination point with the formation of the Jharkhand Party. The credit of being the Father of this party goes to Jaipal Singh. In the 1946 elections under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, almost all reserved seats of Adivasis in Assembly and Lok Sabha were captured by the protagonist of the Jharkhand Movement. In the 1952 elections, Jharkhand Party emerged as the second largest party in the Bihar Assembly with 33 seats.

Gaunjhu (2001) says that Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh is Amrit Putra (Immortal Son) of Jharkhand. He authored a drama on the Life and Works of Jaipal Singh, and with over 20 artists staged the drama at different institutions and places across Jharkhand. The drama was directed by the author himself with Dr. Sushil Kumar 'Ankan', an artiste and Associate Professor of Ranchi University Department of Philosophy, played the role of the Marang Gomke. The drama performance attracted huge audience wherever it was staged.

—Munda's Heart

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Appendix

Pahan: *Pahar* (Naguri Munda), *pa:ra* (Hasada Munda), pahan (Sadani and Hindi).

Pahan is the priestly class of the Munda race, who perform religious functions for the community on occasions such as different festivals, sowing and transplantation of paddy, harvest, naming ceremony of a child, marriage and after-death rituals etc. The pahan also offers sacrifices to different benevolent deities (bongas) that the Munda race believes in. Among his offerings included fowls of different colours, eggs, leaves, cigar, rice, whisky brewed out of *mahua* flower (Maduca latifolia) or even uncastrated male goat. According to *Asur Legend*, the institution of *pahan* has been created by Singbonga (Supreme Spirit) himself to play the role of a minister (bridge) between Him and his Creation. This institution of *pahan* was again reinforced by Singbonga when He came down to Earth to destroy the Asurs who smelted iron day-in and day-out and heated up the Universe. Then, when Singbonga was going up, the women of the Asur men were supported to have caught him by His legs and asked Him how they will live. He told them that now on, if they obey His orders and remain under the laws set by Him, His priests, the pahans, will offer them sacrifices. Volume I of Encyclopaedia Mundarica (pg 242), authored by J.B. Hoffmann states: "The *pahan* is the representative and the minister of that form of monotheism which we find exposed in the Asur legend, where the Singbonga appears as the creator of the universe, the overlord of all spirits, and the source of all power to reward or punish men which is attributed to the spirits. He holds his office by right of birth: he must not only belong to the Munda race and to the clan of the village community,

but must also descend from the founder of the village, in a straight line, through the first born sons or their nearest agnates. However, as seen above in the sentence, it is not always the eldest son who succeeds his father.

His office is purely honourary: he does not depend on it for his living. However, in a few villages in the Hasada country, and in nearly all the villages elsewhere, a rice field called *pahanai* or *dalikatari* is attached to the office. The Mundas, kept to this day in the villages where the Oraons have superseded the Mundas, also posess such a field. The sacrificial fowls are given by, or rather taken from, the community, the *pahan* indicating to the youngmen the individual fowl he wants, and them catching it. The rice needed for the meal and beer after the sacrifice of *kolemsingon* the *pahan's* threshing floor, is now brought by the villagers, unless the *pahan* undertakes to furnish it from his own....

It is as representative of the community that he offers a sacrifice to Singbonga, the tutelary spirits and to the shades of the ancestors of the *ba*, *batauli*, *kolemsing* and *mage* feasts...."

In some places, these priestly families use the word '*pahan*' as their surname, though their *killi* (totem), which usually is used in the Munda race after the first name, may be something else. However, most men from *pahan* families use their *killi* after their first names. The adult male from the pahan clan of a village who perform the role of pahan (priest) for the community is usually addressed as *pahan* by all, and not in his first or second name.

Munda: In recent days, three connotations of the word 'Munda' has emerged: it means the 'chief', it means the name of a 'tribe-group' within the Munda race, it is being increasingly used as the 'second name' by members of this tribe-group, and it also means the name of a 'race', anthropologists call Austro-Asiatic. Munda race, according to Father of Indian Anthropolgy S.C. Roy, is 'these are the peoples whose remote ancestors were once masters of Indian soil—whose doings and sufferings, whose joys and sorrows, once made up the history of the Indian Peninsula. The historian of India generally dismisses from consideration these and other aboriginal tribes as 'an unclaimed ignoble horde who occupy the background of Indian History as the jungle once

covered the land to prepare the soil for better forms of life'." (The Mundas and their Country, pg 1).

Oral history suggests, says Lal Ranvijay Nath Shahdeo, the scion of Palkot Nagbanshi royal family (Palkot had been the seat of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur once), "Mundas prior to Mahabharata had their kingdomin the northern India. Krishna of Yadu dynasty, the ruler of Mathura, who today is worshipped as Lord, had been thrice defeated by King of the Mundas, Jarasandha. On the fourth battle, he was defeated and killed by Krishna. When the Mundas heard that Duryodhan was not willing to give the rightful share of the kingdom to Pandavas and consequently the Mahabharata was to break out, the Mundas set off to fight against the unjust Kauravas. But on the way, Duryodhan is supposed to have met them and pleaded with them to help him in the war. This put the Mundas in a fix, and they decided in Duryodhan's favour because he had approached them. It is believed that the Mundas migrated to Chhotanagpur Plateau and made it their home after the Mahabharata war".

According to Encyclopaedia Mundarica, pg 2881),"Munda sbst. name has been given to the Mundas by the Hindus, and is exclusively used by all but the Mundas themselves. They, as a rule call themselves *Horoko* {*r* pronounced as *d*}(or *Hoko* in Singbhum) though they use also the term '*Munda*'. The latter is the one always used as postp. in the following differentiation: *Kumpatmunda*, the ordinary Mundas; the Mundas of the Ranchi plateau; *Ho*, *Homunda*, *Larka*, *Larkamunda*, the Hos or the Mundas of central Singbhum—not a different tribe, they eat and intermarry with the ordinary Mundas. *Urangmunda*, the scattered Mundas of the Oraon country—not a different tribe, they may eat and intermarry with the ordinary Mundas, but they have forgotten their mother tongue and speak *Sadani; Erangamunda*, a separate tribe of wild Mundas; *Birmunda*, generally called *Biruru* or *Birhoroby* the Mundas... *Santara*, *Saotara*, *Santaramunda*, *Saotaramunda*, the Santals..."

Major tribe groups in the Munda race are Munda, Ho, Santal, Bhumij and Kharia. Their languages, customs and traditions are similar and boast of a glorious common past.

Haat: *Haat* is a weekly village market, where the Mundas took their forest produces and sold them to the local businessman, usually a *Sahu* family. They collected necessary things like salt from him in a barter system. Villagers also took cocks and hensto haat, which were bought and sold in the nearby town by the middlemen. It is usually the married women who did the marketing for the Munda families while the Munda men too went to the haat, but they mostly restricted themselves to social functions like meeting relatives and kin who, in similar way, came to the haat from other villages. Thus village haat served commercial and social functions.

Adibasi/Adivasi: Abroiginal tribes. After the Independence of the country, the Constituent Assembly chose decided the word 'Scheduled Tribe' for these peoples. However, many tribes have been left and yet to be scheduled in the list of Scheduled Tribes, though they are aboriginals.

Marang Gomke: *Marang* in Mundari means 'big', *gomke* means 'master'. The Mundas address big people within their community as 'gomke'. It is a common word. However, 'Marang Gomke' is not, it had been coined by the Mundas only for Jaipal Singh, owing to his stature. No other Munda in history until date has the honour of getting addressed by this word. Attempts to use this word for any other leader, including for N.E. Horo, a Jharkhand Movement stalwart and Babulal Marandi, first chief minister of Jharkhand, has been repudiated.

Nagara: A huge musical instrument, favourite of the Mundas. The instrument has to be played with two huge sticks. The sound of the instrument can simply make a foreigner tremble.

Mandar: Also a musical instrument, relatively smaller in size than nagara. It creates sweet music and is made of mud and tanned animal skin.

Khunti: Khunti was a sub-division of Ranchi district and became a separate district of Jharkhand in 2008. It originates from the word 'Khunt', means the village that was prepared by the Mundas after clearing the forests. This believably took place after 1538 AD, because after settling the Oraons who had to flee from their fort Rohtashgarh after Sher Shah Suri treacherously

took over the forst in 1538 AD, the Mundas moved to the south-east, cleared the forest and settled. The Oraons, who were being chased by the Sher Shah Suri army, approached the Mundas at Mudma and urged them to protect and settle, to which the Mundas agreed. The Mundas then asked the Oraons to demarcate their area by digging, and the Oraons dug the whole night. When the Mundas woke up the next morning, they found that all their lands had been circled by the diggings of new arrivals whom they had decided to settle. The Mundas then said: '*Ni do Ur kete ang keda*' (Digging and digging, these men went till morning). After this, the Mundas left one family of theirs in each village to become the *munda* (chief) and *pahan* (priest), and themselves moved towards the South-east to settle afresh, which later came to be known as 'Khunti'. Till today, this history is commemorated by the Oraons at Mudma, some 25 kilometres west of Ranchi, famously known as Mudma Mela.

Thanedar: Officer in-charge of a police station.

Khasi: A male goat. This goat is castrated so that it does not go behind female goats, and concentrates only on its food in order to grow into a fine domesticated animal to be used later for meat. Khasi is reared in almost all Adivasi families.

Lo Bir Sendra: Annual Hunting by Adivasi villagers. This was the title decided by Jayant, son of Jaipal, for a book comprising collection of some writings of his father, which took the form of an autobiography, and was published in 2003.

Dombari Buru: 'Buru' in Mundari means 'hill', Dombari Buru is the name of that hill where Birsa fought the British Army. It is located some 10 kms south-east of Khunti near Ulihatu, the birth place of Birsa, the legendary tribal leader. Mundas have erected a stone pillar on the top of the hill, and it is a kind of a place of pilgrimage for the Adivasis now. Every year, Mundas gather in huge number here to commemorate the historic incident where hundreds of Munda warriors perished fighting against the mighty British. Lots of folktales and folklores are there on Dombari Buru, which are recited even today.

Sadans: *Sadans* are the non-tribal old settlers of Chotanagpur. They came from different areas for the purpose of business and

trade, and settled in Chotanagpur. Living side by side, these settlers adopted the culture and tradition of the adivasis. Today, it is difficult to differentiate the culture of an adivasi from that of a sadan, though recent political forces in the region have left this social cohesion dangerously disturbed for selfish political gains.

Singbonga: The Supreme Spirit. The Mundas believe that he is the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, residing high up in Heaven (*sirma*). Encyclopaedia Mundarica states: 'the spirit of light, the Supreme God of the Mundas, all-good, omniscient and omnipotent, maker, master and foster of all things living or inanimate. Singbonga, when comes down on Earth, loves to reside on a sal (Shorua robusta) tree and it is due to this reason that the *pahan* has to worship Him at the foot of a *Shorua robusta* tree whenever there is a worship for Him. This, to the foreign eye, appears that the *pahan* is worshipping the tree. This however, is not the case. He is worshiping the Sigbonga who sits on the Shorua robuta tree whenever His name is invoked.

Sarna: Sarana is the sacred place of worship, usually a Shorea robusta-grove. It is here that all the worship and the sacrifices are performed.

Sasandiri: This is the burial ground of the Munda village where the dead are buried. This place also is a very sacred place for the Mundas. Without *sasan* and *sarna*, a village does not become a village. The spirit of the dead ancestors are revered and worshipped by the Mundas.

Killi: *Killi* system of the Mundas is the *totem* system. It is not the *gotra* system of the Hindu society where origin is sought to some famous ancestor. *Totem* system is exclusive to Austro-Asiatic tribes in India, wherein a clan is traced to a single origin with a symbol that may be of an animal, plant, bird, fish, stone, cobra, tortoise and the like. As per rules, a man belonging to a particular *killi* should regard that object or thing as coming from its own family and not harm it. Strict rules prevail in the Munda community with regard to *totem*, like a man cannot marry a woman from the same *totem*, etc. This system in later days has been borrowed by tribesmen of Dravidian groups as well.

Doisa/Khukra: These were the capitals of Nagbanshi rules in Chotanagpur. The Nagbanshis had their capitals first in Sutiambe, located to the east of Ranchi near Pithoria (Pithoria itself used to be a juncture where traders who travelled south to north and from east to west, met, rested, interacted and exchanged information and ideas. According to famous Nagpuri scholar Dr. B.P. Kesri, who himself hailed from Pithoria, this place was important trade hub during the Gupta and Maurya periods too.

From Sutiambe, the Nagabanshi capital moved to Chutia, set up by one Chutu Munda, located in Ranchi city itself; from where it again moved to Khukhra [about 40 kilometres west of Ranchi], then to Doisa, then to Palkote [some 100 kilometres to south west of Ranchi] and then in 1868 to Bharno and thence to Rantu [Ratu on western fringe of Ranchi]. (Roy, pg 98).

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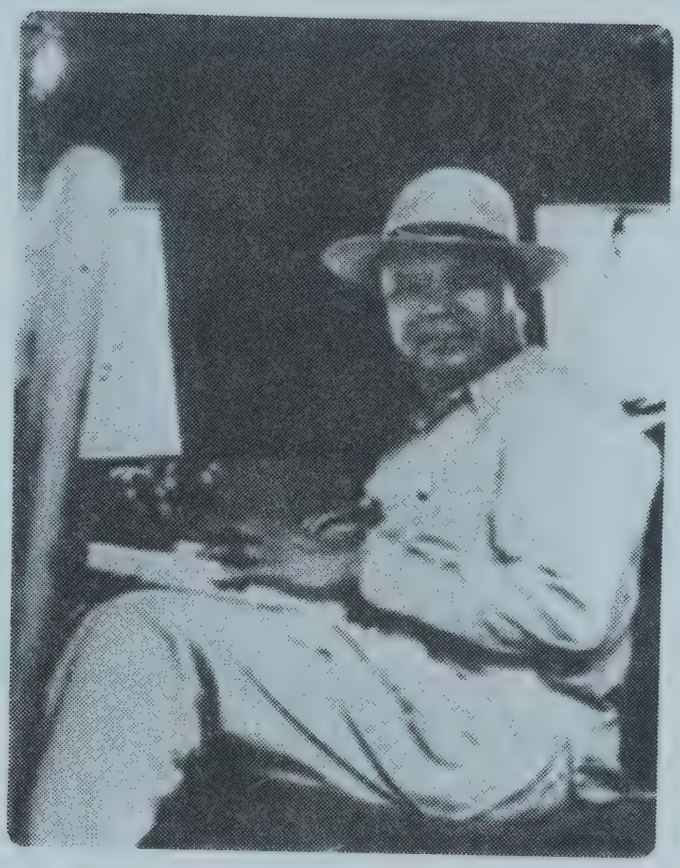

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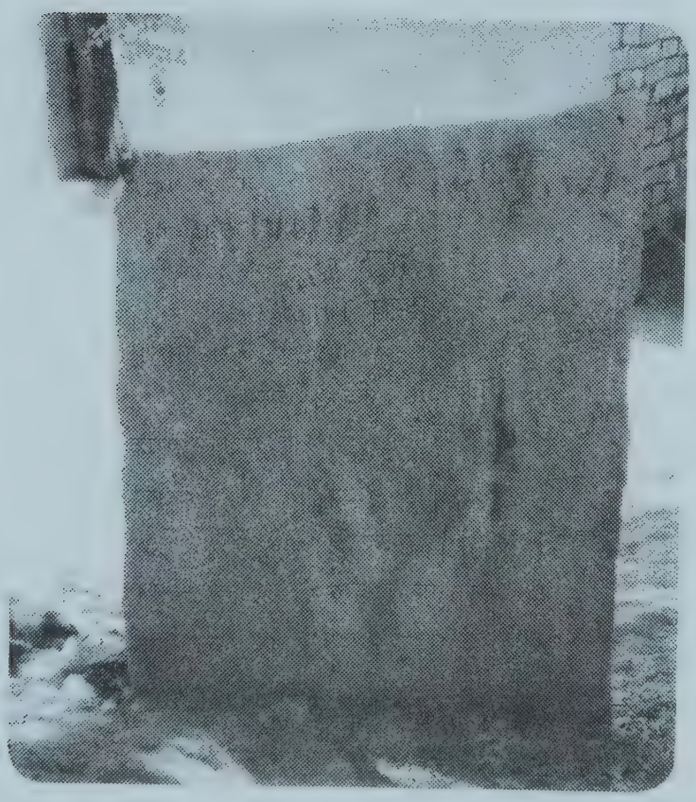

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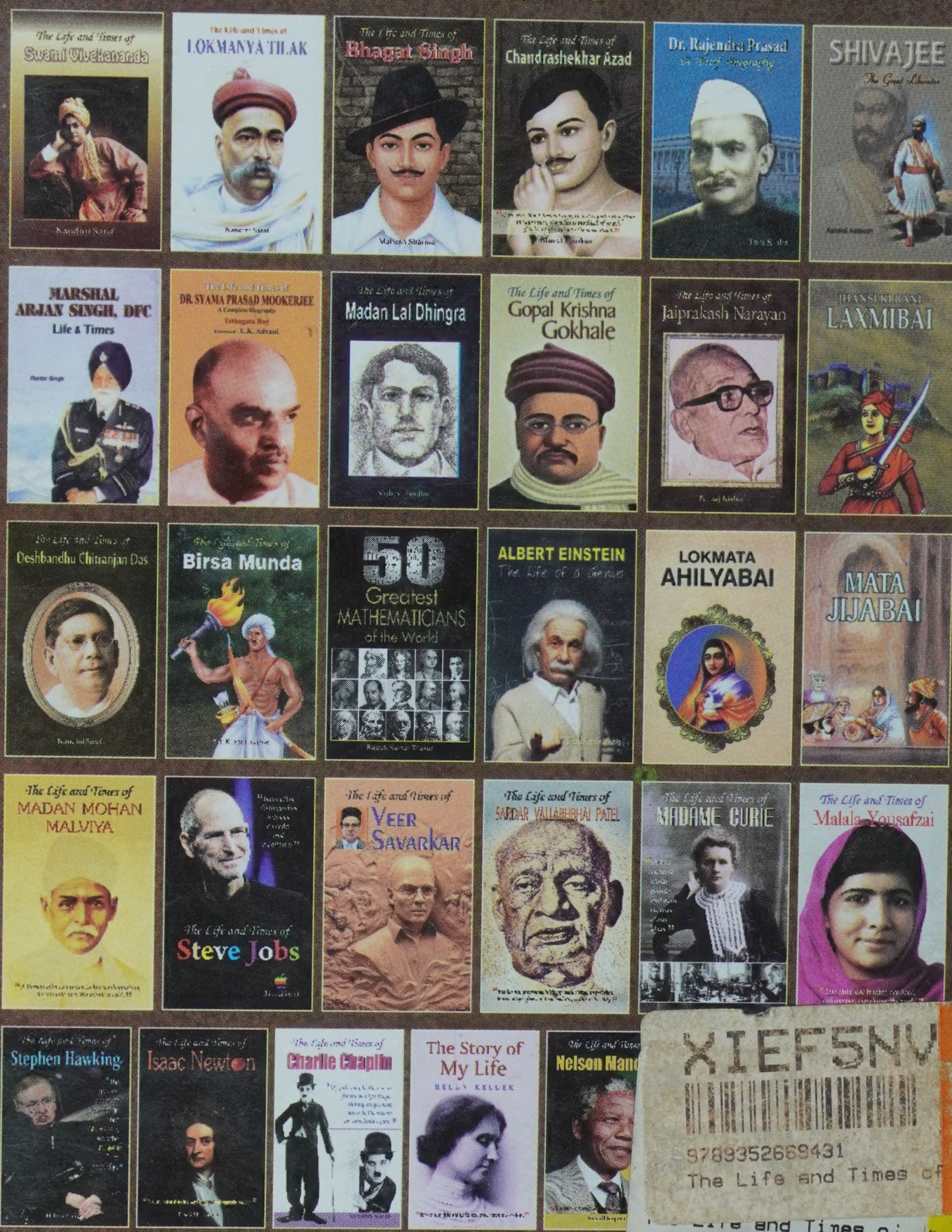

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